

# Divided India

---

ROBERT AURA SMITH

---



---

Whittlesey House  
MCGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC.  
*New York : London*

## DIVIDED INDIA

COPYRIGHT, 1947, BY MCGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC.

All rights reserved. This book, or parts thereof, may not be reproduced in any form without permission of the publisher.

This book is produced in full compliance with the government's regulations for conserving paper and other essential materials.

PUBLISHED BY WHITTLESEY HOUSE

A DIVISION OF THE MCGRAW HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



## PREFACE

MY PURPOSE in writing this book is to make a small contribution, if I can, to better understanding between Britons and Americans. In common with many other Americans, I have come to feel that our close association and sympathetic understanding are essential to the peace of the world in these disputatious times. The so-called problem of India has often been an impediment to those good relations. It is my feeling that much of that impediment can be removed if Americans acquaint themselves a little more fully with some factors in the Indian case that are not always brought to public attention.

The Indian political situation has, for a number of years, been a contest. It has been a contest between Indian points of view and British points of view. Americans have been made more familiar with the former than with the latter. I am trying here to bring both points of view into focus by a more detailed analysis of some British attitudes than has been customary in writing about India. I believe and hope that if Americans will take some of these points of view into account their judgments of the Indian scene will be more accurate and their relationship with Britons less susceptible to misunderstanding.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge my very great indebtedness to a large number of able civil servants in India, both British and Indian, who have helped me, over a period of some years, to assemble this material. I owe an especial debt of gratitude to Sir Frederick Puckle and his associates in the Department of Information in the Government of India, Messrs. Natarajan, Thapar and Bokhari. Their friendly counsel has always been stimulating as well as enlightening.

The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect, in any sense, the policies or judgments of my employer, *The New York Times*. I am happy, however, to express my appreciation for the sympathetic help that I have had from my colleagues on *The New York Times*, and especially to note the encouragement of Mr. Neil MacNeil.

The maps in this book are the work of another of my colleagues on the *Times*, J. Russell Walrath, chief cartographer, whose practical enthusiasm for geography is always a great help.

The photographs have been supplied through the courtesy of the Information Service of the Government of India.

I have been assisted in the preparation of the manuscript by Miss Virginia Chapman.

*New York, November, 1946.*

ROBERT AURA SMITH

# CONTENTS

PREFACE	v
I. FIXED ELEMENTS IN INDIA	1
II. THE CHANGING CLASH OF OPINION	28
III. THE POLITICAL AND EMOTIONAL CLIMATE	41
IV. THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND	53
V. ELEMENTS OF DIVISION	
1. Moderates and Extremists	90
VI. ELEMENTS OF DIVISION	
2. States and Provinces	113
VII. ELEMENTS OF DIVISION	
3. Hindus and Muslims	138
VIII. THE QUESTION OF CIVIL WAR	183
IX. THE FURTHER ATTEMPT	204
APPENDIX: THE PROPOSALS OF MAY, 1946	243
INDEX	255



# ILLUSTRATIONS

<i>Gandhi and Lord Pethick-Lawrence</i>	frontispiece
<i>Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade</i>	facing page 38
<i>The Viceroy shaking hands with Mr M. A. Jinnah, President, All-India Muslim League</i>	39
<i>The Viceroy, Viscount Wavell</i>	70
<i>Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru</i>	71
<i>Master Tara Singh, Sikh Leader (left) and his Bodyguard</i>	102
<i>Lord Pethick-Lawrence</i>	103
<i>Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Scheduled Castes Leader and Former Mem- ber of the Viceroy's Executive Council</i>	134
<i>The Rt. Hon. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty</i>	135
<i>H. H. The Nawab of Bhopal, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes</i>	166
<i>Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, former Congress Party President, in conversation with Sir Stafford Cripps. Lord Pethick-Law- rence is first from the left.</i>	167
<i>The Marquis of Linlithgow</i>	198
<i>Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, "The Frontier Gandhi"</i>	199
<i>Mr. M. A. Jinnah and Mr. C. Rajagopalacharia</i>	230

## LIST OF MAPS

MAJOR LANGUAGES OF INDIA	68
INDIA'S RAILWAY NETWORK	80
BRITISH INDIA AND INDIAN INDIA	114
THE PAKISTAN PROPOSAL	165



---

# I. THE FIXED ELEMENTS IN INDIA

---

INDIA, IN 1946, HAS BEEN IN AN ALMOST CONTINUOUS STATE OF "CRISIS."

Famine—Cyclone—Cholera—Mutiny—Rioting—Arson—Resistance.

General Election—Provincial Elections—Interim Government—Cabinet Mission—Round Table—Partition—Compromise.

Success—Failure—Hope—Despair—Union—Division.

Those have been the headline words.

This is the period of "after the war" to which reference has been made, again and again, since 1939. Many things had been left for "settlement" in that period. The "settlement" has proved to be by no means simple. New problems have complicated old ones.

Day after day there have been changes in emphasis, shifts of ground, the search for new expedients. To most onlookers India has become a welter of cross purposes, a confused and confusing kaleidoscope.

Changes are taking place, sometimes, it seems, almost hourly. For this is a time of change. But those outward manifestations of an inward turmoil are not accidental nor merely impulsive. Their basis is deep-seated.

The developments in this critical year in India's history are the product of a long period of growth and change. There have been gradual mutations in British political philosophy and practice embracing the span of almost 150 years. There has been, at the same time, the rise of self-conscious nationalism among the Indians. Those two interacting factors have made changes inevitable.

Such changes, moreover, are not peculiar to India by any means. The conflict of ideologies that was sharpened in the war has thrown into high relief the fact that working political structures throughout the world are in process of change. New governments are being devised and new functions are being allocated to existing governments. There is, perhaps, no superstition in the political field quite so baseless as the superstition of

the "status quo." There simply is not a "status quo," as such, in the world at the present time; nor is there a serious political proposal that India, or any other country for that matter, should revert to some mythical prewar position, not subject to profound modification.

In India the changes now contemplated affect not merely the relationships between His Majesty's Government, as one party, and the people of India, as another. They affect also the relationships between various groups within the Indian community on whose behalf a new sovereignty must be forged.

There is a constantly shifting focus of attention in this problem. The political barometer in India has been going up and down from week to week for more than a year. There are a hundred points at which adjustments and compromises have been proposed, and some points at which they will be reached. It is advisable, therefore, at the outset to give some attention to those elements in the situation that are not subject to day-by-day modification. There are some enduring factors that must be part of any political settlement that is made between His Majesty's Government and the people of India.

Obviously any new Indian Government will have to be set up on a trial and error basis. There will be a number of different trials and possibly a number of errors. There will be a variety of changes this year and next year and the year after. What we are obliged to do in analyzing those changes is to arrive as nearly as possible at bases of judgment that do not arise merely from an instinctive "right or wrong" reaction, but that on the contrary derive from the objective examination of as many facts in the case as can be brought to bear. Some of those facts are beyond dispute. Others can be viewed from one standpoint or another, depending upon the predilection of the individual.

The first inescapable factor in this changing Asiatic scene is the Asiatic insistence upon change. One reason why the whole idea of the status quo is illusory is that the Asiatics in general and the Indians in particular are solidly set against it. The rise of Asiatic nationalism is one of the major political developments of the last fifty years. It is the reflection, in part, of the whole concept of the nation-state as it was evolved in Western Europe 150 years ago. East Asia, in a sense, is getting the backlash of the



French Revolution. In addition to that, individuals from the Far East have come into the Western world for schooling and have come into contact with a political philosophy quite different from that which has existed over a long period of time in their own countries. Quite naturally, and quite rightly, they take back to these countries the yeasty ferment of a new group of ideas.

Out of those factors there has arisen this one solid and inescapable political fact, that the literate and articulate persons in a number of Asiatic countries are determined that the structures of government within those countries shall be of their own choosing and their own making.

Most of the Occidentals who are concerned with the problems of government in those countries have long since recognized this fact. The ideas of "imperialism," for its own sake, and of "retentionism" as a political program have simply ceased to exist among the persons who are actually involved in the business of government. The "die-hard" of the imperial system is largely a figment of the opposition's imagination. He is a convenient whipping boy when change is suggested, but he no longer exists in the flesh among the persons who are responsible for the actual administration of dependencies. Such persons have long since recognized that changes will be made and that one of the major changes is the recognition of this solid thing called Asiatic nationalism.

#### THE FEELING OF INDIANS

As far as India is concerned, this desire for political change is a curious composite. It has elements of long historical memory in it. It has within it also elements of racial feeling, of social self-consciousness, of definite and specific opposition to anything that could properly be called "alien" rule.

The Indian word for government as such, that is, for the idea of ruling, is the word *raj*. It is familiar to us in forms like *Rajah*, the ruler, or *Maharajah*, the great ruler. It carries within itself the whole connotation of the idea of the exercise of authority. The Indian speaks of the existing government in his country as the British *Raj*. If, in addition to that he is racially self-conscious, he very often speaks of it as the "White *Raj*," and there is a concealed threat when it is so used. For the last two generations, a new term has come to have compelling appeal. This is *Swaraj*. It is

usually loosely translated as "home rule," but psychologically it has a wider implication, that of a government truly of one's own choosing. It is really "self-rule" in the truest sense.

This is the greatest single factor in the Indian situation. The Indian, articulate or not, very definitely wishes to be rid of an alien *raj* and to substitute for it a government that belongs to him. This goes much deeper than a mere objection to specific characteristics of foreign rule. It is almost instinctive. It will not be modified by the character of foreign rule, however benign that rule might be, or might become.

This particular reaction on the part of individuals is essentially negative in so far as it springs from the feeling of social discrimination, as it is sometimes practiced, or from memories of specific personal or group abuses. It is a grievance feeling; it desires to be rid of something extraneous. It conditions the thinking of almost every Indian. It is not objective. It does not weigh cause and effect. It is, moreover, essentially sterile in the political field, precisely because it is a grievance feeling. Nevertheless, it is a solid, important and inescapably fixed element in the whole of the Indian scene. It is quite possible to make a good case for the benevolence of British rule in India, but that good case will fall upon deaf ears among the vast majority of Indians. The British *Raj* is alien, and the Indians wish to have no more of it.

#### EMPHASIS ON CULTURE

Now while this is negative in one sense, it has its positive aspects as well. There is coupled with this desire to be rid of alien rule a very definite aspiration on the part of many individuals to set up structures within the society that are a reflection of the characteristic integrity of that society itself. Politically, this means that there is the desire, not merely to be rid of foreign government, but to practice self-government. This factor in Indian nationalism can be best discerned, perhaps, in the emphasis that has been placed, from time to time, on characteristic elements in Indian culture that are worth preserving. The stress, for example, on Indian history, on India's advancement in the arts, and on religion, are a reflection of the individual's preoccupation with the things that make it worthwhile to preserve his characteristic culture and to reflect it in the political field.

There are also some Indians who believe that with the establishment

of their own government it will be possible to do some things that are not possible under an alien administration. They believe, for example, that it is entirely feasible to look to a national budget that scales down the cost of a civil service, that reduces salaries, and that thus makes possible the extension of governmental amelioration. Some Indians have declared that under an Indian administration it would be possible more easily to set up a complete system of free, public, compulsory education because Indians would be willing to accept salary levels that would not be acceptable to Britons. What this amounts to is a rather vague belief that an entire country would voluntarily accept a lower standard of living if that standard of living were self-imposed. It is quite possible that this may be the case. It is by no means impossible that some of the economic and sociological problems of a country like India can be approached more successfully from a strictly Indian point of view than they could be from a foreign point of view, however well disposed that point of view might be.

In any case, from both the negative and the positive points of view, there is an Indian determination that the basic structures of the country require modification. There is not a substantial group of articulate opinion in the whole of India that at any time in the past twenty-five years has not put self-government as the first of its objectives. Abstractly considered, that may be right or wrong. It may be short-sighted, or it may be brilliantly intuitive. Concretely, it is an essential fact in the situation that cannot possibly be overlooked. There cannot be any satisfactory adjustment of India's political status that does not take into account, at the outset, the fact that all of the substantial groups of Indians wish to live under a government that they know to be of their own choosing.

#### BRITISH DETERMINATION

There is a counterpart to this political determination on the part of Indians in the political determination on the part of Britons. There is, on the part of His Majesty's Government, not merely a group of fixed commitments to withdraw from India. There is also a fixed political determination among a majority of Britons to modify the Empire structures in respect to India. This was put in those words in September, 1945, in simultaneous statements by the British Prime Minister and Viceroy in India when it was declared that His Majesty's Government was "deter-

mined" to effect changes in India. The Government reflected, accurately, the popular will.

This determination is not a political accident. It is not the outgrowth of a change in parties in the Government in the United Kingdom. It is not a "Labor" policy. It is not the product of the most recent war, nor of the war that preceded it. It is, rather, the reflection of a long and slow growth in political ideas in the whole of Western Europe and the United Kingdom which has been taking place for more than 150 years.

The successful revolt of the American colonies brought to the attention of Britain the need for a revision of what had been accepted, without question, as the proper relationship between a mother-country and her dependencies. Subsequently, new degrees in this relationship were gradually evolved and eventually the whole idea of "voluntary association" came into effect in respect to the major Dominions of the British Crown.

Some of those developments were peaceful and thoughtful. Others were violent and disorderly. The sharpest turning point in British political thought could possibly be associated with the Boer War. The war in itself was not particularly popular in the United Kingdom, and it led very definitely to a sharp re-examination of a whole group of political concepts. From the beginning of this century Britain's "Empire" policy ceased to be static and became progressively more flexible. The total change in the concept of the Empire was reflected most sharply in the Balfour Declaration of 1926. This created a new associative relationship between dependencies and the mother-country and this in turn was written into the Statute of Westminster in 1931 when it was agreed that the Parliament in the United Kingdom was not sovereign in the Dominions.

#### CHANGE IN ECONOMIC POSITION

Now in addition to this gradual change in political attitude toward dependencies in general, there has been, in the last thirty years, a profound change also in the economic relationship of India, in particular, and the United Kingdom. It would be unfair to insist that this is the sole reason for changes in British policy, but it is very definitely true that the profit motive has ceased to be a factor in dealing with India. India's place in the total economy of the Empire has been changed from that of an asset to a liability. There is now no good reason why Britain should cling to a

retentionist policy from the point of view of making anything out of it. Britain's political conscience has been changed in regard to India. And Britain's economic position has also changed. There is no objection to being placed in a position in which one's conscience and one's bank roll happen to be on the same side in a given situation. The situation exists at the present time in the relationship of the United Kingdom and India.

The economic relationship between these two societies may be said to fall, roughly, into three periods. First is the period of the East India Company, extending from about the beginning of the eighteenth century to about 1830. The second is the period of the British industrial expansion from the beginning of the last century to the end of the first World War. The third is the period of Indian economic autonomy from 1923 to the present time.

In the first period Great Britain derived enormous wealth from India. It was an age of plunder, and the East India Company proved itself adept at that game. Very valuable raw materials were taken out of India at a very low cost and a heavy toll was also taken in actual gold and silver. The statement is often made that the wealth of India financed the industrial revolution in the United Kingdom. Whether or not that is true, the contribution that was made by Indian wealth was a major factor in the expanding economy of the very small British Isles. The credits naturally were all on the British side. India was a source of wealth, and that source of wealth was vigorously and often ruthlessly exploited.

With the perfection of industrial techniques in the United Kingdom, there came about a change in this economic relationship. In the first place the East India Company was made completely liable to political control in 1833, and then eventually was put out of business altogether in 1858. The Government of India became a political and public and not an economic and private function. With that change, two important things took place: First, individuals in the United Kingdom supplied to India funds on a large scale for the development of Government or Government-supervised enterprises. Second, India provided for the United Kingdom a very large and important market for the processed goods that came out of Britain as a result of the industrial revolution. The unification of India required the building of railroads. The improvement of India required the development of large agricultural areas, the building of irrigation

projects, dams and canals, the maintenance of a civil service and pension funds. These projects demanded very considerable sums of money. That money was available in the London market India, as a political dependency, could borrow money in the United Kingdom and pay a lower rate of interest than elsewhere. The money, however, was contributed by British bondholders who derived their living from the interest on investment in the processes that were modifying the whole character of Indian economy. In this way India became a source of livelihood for a considerable number of persons in the United Kingdom.

Winston Churchill is supposed to have said, on one occasion, that one person in every five in the United Kingdom derived his livelihood from India. When and where Mr. Churchill made such a statement cannot, for some reason, be ascertained. But in any case, the attribution reflects that there was, during this period of the development of large-scale enterprise, a substantial number of persons in the United Kingdom whose livelihood was derived from Indian investments. Similarly, pensions to persons retired from the Indian Civil Service, or from military service in India, provided a source of wealth for those persons and their families when they were resident in the United Kingdom. The salaries in India were substantial, and were made so in order to attract competent persons. Retirement funds were therefore large and the payment of these funds constituted a regular flow of wealth from the Indian dependency to the mother-country. This was characteristic of this entire second period in the Indian economy.

But in addition to that, the last half of the nineteenth century was a period of very substantial expansion in the United Kingdom in the production of consumers' goods. Two items in that production were enormously important in the Indian market. First was cotton textiles. Second was heavy metal. In the earlier period of exploitation India had supplied a very large volume of fabrics to the world. Cotton and silk were produced on hand looms and were an extremely valuable contribution to a rising standard of living in the Occident. Machine spinning and weaving, however, as it was developed in the United Kingdom, made it possible to put down finished textiles, not merely in the Occident, but in India itself at a lower cost than that of the handmade products. India was to prove a gigantic market for that export. At the present time the normal

consumption of cotton piece goods runs around six billion yards a year. The typical Indian nether garment, the *dhotti*, may require up to nine yards. Cotton was, and is, the characteristic fabric of the country and even millions of hand looms could not supply the need. So Indian hand industry went into a hopeless decline and Britain's machine-made textiles dominated the market. It was an important source of wealth.

Britain's metal industry, meanwhile, supplied the steel for the building of India's railroads. British shipyards supplied the craft for the trade with India. Construction materials went out to build up India's cities, and in this way India became a major outlet for heavy industry in the United Kingdom.

#### PLACE OF THE FACTORS

Steel and cotton were the backbone of Britain's trade. In addition to them, there was a very large group of small manufactures. There was, after the turn of the century, the beginning of a motor-car market in India. There was the whole body of fabricated goods that reflected a slowly rising standard of living. Britain was the principal entrepreneur. India had free trade, but Britain had priority in the market. This was brought about in part by the fact that there had been established in India the original "factors" in trade. These were organizations that were buyers and sellers. They did forwarding, they wrote insurance, they handled shipping. Their names are known around the world . . . companies like Thomas Cook, Cox and King, McKinnon Mackenzie. They understood the Indian market and they used it.

In this period the United Kingdom supplied approximately two-thirds of India's total imports and the largest single item in those imports was textiles. So during this time India was a double source of economic advantage to the United Kingdom. British money had been put out advantageously and British products were being sold advantageously.

The increase in Indian population from the middle of the last century on made it apparent that the economy of the country could not be sustained permanently along the lines that were dictated by this advantageous British trade. Pressure on the land became progressively greater, and it was obviously necessary to effect the transfer of a substantial number of persons from the field of agriculture to the field of goods and serv-

ices. There was, presumably, only one way in which this could be done and that was through the creation of Indian industries. Accordingly, it was determined, at the end of the first World War, to establish a new type of economy in India in which there would be an attempt eventually to reach a balance between raw-material production and the fabrication of finished products. To do that it was necessary to take certain British goods out of the Indian market, and it was necessary also to abandon the long-standing principle of free trade and to substitute protection for certain enterprises in India. With this in mind the British Government, in 1921, adopted legislation granting effective tariff autonomy to India. It was stipulated that an economic policy, adopted by the Indian legislature and approved by the Viceroy, should not be nullified by any action within the United Kingdom. The result was that in 1923 the first Indian tariffs were levied. Those tariffs were levied against British goods. The two items for which protection was first sought in India were textiles and steel.

The result of this change of policy on the position of imports from Britain in the Indian market was drastic and far-reaching. Within one generation Britain dropped from the position of controlling two-thirds of India's imports to controlling approximately one-fourth. The Lancashire cotton mills were almost put out of business. Their Indian market simply disappeared. With the progressive decline in British exports to India, there went simultaneously a gradual amortization of some of the largest Indian commitments to Britain. The railways and canals began to pay off. Thus, at the same time that British exports to India were steadily declining, the volume of interest payments on Indian indebtedness to Britons was also progressively reduced.

#### RISE OF INDUSTRIES

A further aspect of this modification was, quite naturally, the rise of certain industries in India to replace the goods that had previously been sent out by Britain. The most immediate development was in the cotton textile field and in the course of twenty years India was able to build up a cotton textile industry that eventually rated more than ten million spindles and that had a capacity of six billion yards, or roughly, the total Indian consumption.



Inside the wall of tariff protection an Indian steel industry grew up. There was, in Bihar Province, a confluence of coal and iron, and excellent supplies of limestone were easily accessible. The result was the growth of the great Tata Steel operation at Jamshadpur, southwest of Calcutta, that eventually became the largest steel producer under the British flag. It was only a matter of time until the rails and locomotives for the Indian railways, ships' plates and other metallic materials for which India had always been dependent upon Britain, came to be locally produced.

In actual practice the growth of industrialization in India did not solve the population pressure problem because the population grew more rapidly than industrialization itself, but it did change completely the position of the United Kingdom in respect to the economy of India.

This change, which had been gradually taking place from 1923 onward, was enormously accelerated by the war. Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities there was formed in India the Far Eastern Group Supply Council. This body was a purchasing agency. Its business was to acquire for the Allies in India needed materials of war. The largest single one of those materials, in the beginning, was jute. It was used for sand bags all over the world. Jute was also used for various types of webbing, and mixed with cotton in a form called hessian cloth, it was a substantial military material. India was also a major producer of shoes. India's output of tanned hides had been for years the first in the world, and with the outbreak of war a huge market was afforded for all types of footwear. The Indian metal industry produced steel plates for tanks and ships, and it also produced shell casings and an immense volume of small arms and ammunition.

These materials were purchased from India by the Group Supply Council. They were charged to the United Kingdom, and the return accrued as credit in India's swelling account in London. That had been for years a debit account. It became, in the early days of the war, an Indian credit balance. As matters stand now India has in these credits a balance of approximately four billion dollars. Great Britain owes India money. There are, of course, individual services and interest accounts that are being paid for by Indian remittances to the United Kingdom. These charges could be wiped out over night if the books were balanced.

We have been made familiar, over a long period of years, with the

distressing picture of the poor Indian villager ground down into the dust to pay his taxes to provide the money that flows from India to Britain. We may as well revise that mental image now. We can now justifiably get the picture of the poor British taxpayer being ground down to supply the remittances that go from Britain to India.

It is not our purpose to suggest that the motive for Great Britain's attitude toward Indian independence is a purely economic one. Declarations of policy and of the objectives that were to be attained in policy were firmly established before this modification of the economic position took place. It is our purpose, however, to suggest very strongly that anyone who believes now that the United Kingdom is determined to "hang on" to India for the sake of the profits to be derived from its government has not acquainted himself with the economic facts in the case. Britain is dealing with a liability and not an asset when it comes to the "Brightest Jewel in the Crown."

#### THE BRITISH COMMITMENTS

The specific political commitments to withdrawal from India have come about so gradually that many persons, even in Britain itself, have been unaware of their far-reaching implications. The growth and development of those commitments extends over a period of almost a hundred years.

The first statement of policy in this respect was the famous Declaration of Queen Victoria in 1858. Her proclamation said

"It is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge."

That declaration, made at that time, obviously did not conceive of the possibility of Indian independence. It was rather a declaration of intent and purpose based on the belief that Indians could and would be able in time to undertake a far larger degree of responsibility than any that was accorded to them in the middle of the last century. The declaration, however, has even more force than its text would indicate when it is remembered that it was made immediately after the Indian Mutiny, when there was a high degree of mutual distrust and ill will between Britons

and Indians. The statement, therefore, should be regarded as essentially conciliatory, and in that light it was a considerable step forward from the prevailing political atmosphere of the Mutiny itself.

The actual putting into effect of this free and impartial admission to the Queen's service was a slow process. There was not, in this earlier period, any substantial addition of Indians to the Civil Service, and under the Indian Councils Act of 1861, the Indians had no part in legislative functions. They served in an advisory capacity only, and only by appointment.

The twentieth century brought in more rapid changes in policy. Indian political parties had been formed, and by 1909 some elective machinery had been established. This development was important because it allowed Indians to enter the business of government at their own volition and not at the behest of the ruling power. More Indians also entered the Civil Service, and Indian political aspirations began to take shape.

The period of the first World War served to crystallize, for the first time, the real issue of Indian nationalism as opposed to British Empire policy. Indian troops were used overseas in the British service, and it was presumably for Empire survival that they fought. Indian nationalists challenged Britain's war aims then, just as they did thirty years later. New commitments were demanded.

#### THE MONTAGU DECLARATION

It was to meet this situation that the next great declaration of policy was made. In August, 1917, the then Secretary of State for India, Edwin S. Montagu, went before the House of Commons to state:

The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to a progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.

That declaration was not allowed to stand merely as a pious wish. It was implemented by legislation, the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919. That act provided specific instruments of government in which Indians could actually enjoy that "increasing association." A legislature at the center was set up in which Indians enjoyed an outright elected

majority. The power of this central legislature was limited by the authority vested in the Governor-General in Council to veto legislative acts and in the event of failure of the legislative process to promulgate legislation by simple decree. But there was implicit, in this act, the fact that the Indian political society was expected to move toward a much higher degree of autonomy than had previously been thought possible.

The terms used by Mr. Montagu, "increasing association," "gradual development of self-governing institutions," and "progressive realization of responsible government" were held by many Indian nationalists to be too vague to be satisfactory. There was a repeated demand for a more concrete affirmation of the exact character of British policy and the scope of British intentions.

In 1929, under the terms of the Montagu-Chelmsford Act, a mission was dispatched to India, headed by Sir John Simon, to explore the need for revision of the Act. No Indians were associated with that mission and as a result the fear was expressed that its recommendations might suggest a retrogression rather than an advance in policy. Partly in the effort to meet that feeling, the then Viceroy, Lord Irwin (later the Earl of Halifax), made a trip to England to determine, if possible, what would be the precise position of the British Government as it planned for the Round Table conferences that were to come out of the Simon Commission's recommendations. ~

#### THE PLEDGE OF DOMINION STATUS

The Viceroy brought back to India, in October 1929, an explicit commitment from the Government. He announced:

In view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and in India regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intention of the British Government in enacting the Statute of 1919, I am authorized on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress as therein contemplated is the attainment of Dominion Status.

As much as ten years earlier it had been stated in the House of Commons that "Dominion Status" was the "goal" of British policy in India, but the declaration of October, 1929, went beyond that. It made it plain that the course that had been taken was regarded by the British Govern-

ment as a definite progress toward that goal. In the meantime, also, the exact nature of "Dominion Status" had likewise been advanced by the Balfour Declaration of 1926. It was still two years until that declaration was to be fully implemented in law, but the principle had been established that a "Dominion" was fully self-governing in all respects, not subject to the authority of the House of Commons, and bound to the Crown by ties that were entirely voluntary.

It was on that basis that India went into the Round Table conferences of the early Thirties.

But once more the question was raised, in the first Conference, as to the exact character of the executive that Great Britain proposed for India. Would it be responsible to the people of India, through their elected representatives, or would it continue to be responsible to the British Cabinet, thus to the House of Commons and so, eventually, to the electorate of the United Kingdom? Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald undertook to clarify that problem, and in so doing he made a further commitment of purpose on the part of the British Government. In a statement issued on January 19, 1931, he declared:

The view of His Majesty's Government is that responsibility for the Government of India should be placed upon Legislatures, Central and Provincial, with such provisions as may be necessary to guarantee, during a period of transition, the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances, and also with such guarantees as are required by minorities to protect their political liberties and rights.

His Majesty's Government has taken note of the fact that the deliberations of the Conference have proceeded on the basis, accepted by all parties, that the Central Government should be a Federation of all-India, embracing both the Indian States and British India in a bi-cameral legislature.

With a Legislature constituted on a Federal basis, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to recognize the principle of the responsibility of the Executive to the Legislature.

In the final sentence of that statement, there is the definite and explicit commitment to a transfer of sovereignty. The India Act of 1935, which evolved from the Conferences, undertook to provide the machinery by means of which a sovereign Indian federal union could be set up.

There was outspoken disappointment in Indian political circles over the fact that the India Act of 1935 did not have a preamble that once more reaffirmed the intentions of the British Government. The whole of

the Act, however, was in itself a gigantic reaffirmation of that intention and it was so regarded in the House of Commons. In reply to a question, it was pointed out that the omission of a preamble should be attributed to the fact that there was no need further to declare a political intention that was obvious to all. The Act of 1935 set up genuine working autonomy in the Provinces and transferred all the portfolios to Indian Ministers. But even more important, it provided for the formation of a federal union at the center that would be the instrument of government that could be recognized in time as that of a coequal and fully independent Dominion.

The formation of that government at the center was dependent upon the accession of half of the Princely States, and this had not yet taken place by 1939 when Britain went into the war. But the instrument for the attainment of Dominion Status was there on the statute books. There was no possibility of withdrawing from that commitment.

The position of the British Government was reaffirmed in August, 1940 by the then Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow. Again he stated that complete autonomy was an expectable development in India and that while constitutional changes would not be made during the course of the war, it was the confident expectation of His Majesty's Government that those constitutional changes would be made when the war was over.

#### THE ATLANTIC CHARTER

In August, 1941, Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt met, agreed upon and promulgated the Atlantic Charter. This was a solemn declaration of intent and purpose on behalf of their respective governments. Article Three of that Charter said:

They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.

The question, "What about India?" was immediately raised in Great Britain, in the United States and, most of all, in India. Was this a pledge of British withdrawal? Would the Indians have the right to choose the form of government under which they would live, and would sovereign rights be restored to them?

That question was put to Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons, not merely by those who were proponents of early independence for

India, but also by those who feared that in this declaration Mr. Churchill had, perhaps unwittingly, agreed to a policy of constitutional change in India during the actual course of the war. Mr. Churchill replied:

The joint declaration does not qualify in any way the various statements of policy which have been made from time to time about the development of constitutional government in India, Burma or other parts of the British Empire. We are pledged by the Declaration of August, 1940 to help India to obtain free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth of races, subject, of course, to the fulfilment of the obligations arising from our long connection with India and our responsibilities to its many creeds, races and interests.

This statement by the Prime Minister was greeted with dismay and anger in India. Headlines proclaimed that Mr. Churchill had "repudiated" the Atlantic Charter. Others declared that he had stated that the Charter "did not apply" to India. He was caricatured and lampooned. For a short time he replaced the Secretary of State for India. Mr. Amery, as Public Enemy Number One in the nationalist press. In the United States there was some shaking of heads over Mr. Churchill's "toryism" and "imperialism" and one popular weekly sadly remarked that he had "reverted to type."

Sober reflection since that time, and sober reading of what Mr. Churchill actually said may have revised some of those hasty accusations. The real import of the statement lies in the word "qualify." It means to change or diminish, by additional considerations. What Mr. Churchill actually did was to declare that the various "statements of policy" in respect to "the development of constitutional government in India" were still valid and intact. And those statements of policy had already declared explicitly that India was to choose her form of government and that sovereign rights would be restored. There seems to have been no confusion in Mr. Churchill's mind on this point, since he went on directly to remind the House of the British pledge to help India to obtain "free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth." But Mr. Churchill's declaration was not so interpreted. It was more convenient to keep him as the whipping boy of the "anti-imperialists." And what was lost sight of was the fact that a vigorous reaffirmation of the British commitment to "free and equal" status for India had been made by the Prime Minister who was supposed to be incurably opposed to any such course of action.

## THE WAR CABINET PROPOSALS

Any doubts on the matter should certainly have been dispelled by subsequent events. There had been a clamor for a more definite British program for India. There had been the suggestion, particularly in the United States, that the prosecution of the war in the Far East was being hampered by the apathy or dissidence of the Indians. Something, it was felt, had to be done.

In March, 1942, the British War Cabinet, with Mr. Churchill presiding, drafted its celebrated proposals for constitutional change in India, directly after the war, and for a reorganization of the Government of India, short of those changes, during the war. Those proposals were taken to India for discussion by Sir Stafford Cripps, and so they promptly became known as the "Cripps Proposals."

Unfortunately this led many persons, not merely in India, but also in the United States, to assume that these were proposals made by Sir Stafford himself. He was well known for his liberalism. He was admired in India. He came from a different camp, politically, from that of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India. It was natural to look to him for some "non-imperialistic" ideas about what should be done in regard to India's future and India's participation in the war. Actually, the proposals might just as well have been called the "Churchill Proposals" since they bore the Prime Minister's signature. But they were more than that. They were proposals of His Majesty's Government. It was a wartime government, a coalition. It could bespeak the support of the major parties, and, indeed, of the electorate itself.

These proposals, sharply defined, constituted the most far-reaching and significant commitment that Great Britain had made on India. In one respect they went beyond all the previous declarations when they stated that the future relationships of an Indian union to other members of the British Commonwealth should be determined by Indians themselves. This made directly effective and applicable the aims stated in the Atlantic Charter.

The proposals were short and to the point. Here is their entire text:

His Majesty's Government, having considered the anxieties expressed in this country and in India as to the fulfilment of the promises made in regard to the



future of India, have decided to lay down in precise and clear terms the steps which they propose shall be taken for the earliest possible realization of self-government in India. The object is the creation of a new Indian Union which shall constitute a Dominion, associated with the United Kingdom and the other Dominions by a common allegiance to the Crown, but equal to them in every respect, in no way subordinate in any aspect of its domestic or external affairs.

His Majesty's Government therefore make the following declaration:

(a) Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities, steps shall be taken to set up in India, in the manner described hereafter, an elected body charged with the task of framing a new Constitution for India.

(b) Provision shall be made, as set out below, for the participation of the Indian States in the constitution-making body.

(c) His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the Constitution so framed subject only to:

(1) the right of any Province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new Constitution to retain its present constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides.

With such non-acceding Provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new Constitution, giving them the same full status as the Indian Union, and arrived at by a procedure analogous to that here laid down.

(2) the signing of a Treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the constitution-making body. This Treaty will cover all necessary matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands, it will make provision, in accordance with the undertakings given by His Majesty's Government, for the protection of racial and religious minorities; but will not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide in the future its relationship to the other Member States of the British Commonwealth.

Whether or not an Indian State elects to adhere to the Constitution, it will be necessary to negotiate a revision of its Treaty arrangements, so far as this may be required in the new situation.

(d) The constitution-making body shall be composed as follows, unless the leaders of Indian opinion in the principal communities agree upon some other form before the end of hostilities.

Immediately upon the result being known of the Provincial elections which will be necessary at the end of hostilities, the entire membership of the Lower Houses of the Provincial Legislatures shall, as a single electoral college, proceed to the election of the constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation. This new body shall be in number about one-tenth of the number of the electoral college.

Indian States shall be invited to appoint representatives in the same proportion to their total population as in the case of the representatives of British India as a whole, and with the same powers as the British Indian members.

(e) During the critical period which now faces India and until the new Constitution can be framed His Majesty's Government must inevitably bear the re-

sponsibility for and retain control and direction of the defense of India as part of their world war effort, but the task of organizing to the full the military, moral and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India with the co-operation of the peoples of India. His Majesty's Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations. Thus they will be enabled to give their active and constructive help in the discharge of a task which is vital and essential for the future freedom of India.

The first announcement of the program was greeted throughout the world as a specific offer of Dominion Status, as such, to India. The language seemed explicit enough. Yet when Sir Stafford met the press in New Delhi he was immediately bombarded with questions as to the scope and meaning of the proposals that he had brought to India. In his first press conference, indeed, he was heckled by some journalists whose questions finally carried the implication that the entire offer was a hoax. At that point Sir Stafford felt impelled to say that if the simple sincerity of the proposals, and his own honesty and sincerity in presenting them were further called into question he would be obliged to discontinue the conference. The Indian journalists accepted the rebuke, but continued to press for a statement as to the precise degree to which full independence was implicit in the proposals. Sir Stafford met those questions with forthright answers.

An account of that conference and a part of the subsequent one is given by Sir Reginald Coupland in his short book, *The Cripps Mission*. He explains that no verbatim record of the proceedings is available, but that he has reproduced the substance of some of the most important questions and answers. Sir Stafford, moreover, has given his own testimony that this record correctly states the substance and purport of what was said. (The writer, who was present at the conferences, can also vouch for the accuracy of this report.)

Sir Reginald gave this transcript:

Question: Will the Indian Union be entitled to disown its allegiance to the Crown?

Answer: Yes. In order that there should be no possibility of doubt, we have inserted in the last sentence of paragraph (c) (ii) the statement: "but will not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to

decide in the future its relation to the other Member States of the British Commonwealth.' The Dominion will be completely free either to remain within or to go without the Commonwealth of Nations.

Question. Will the Indian Union have the right to enter into a treaty with any other nation in the world?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Can the union join any contiguous foreign countries?

Answer: There is nothing to prevent it. Canada can join the U.S.A. tomorrow if it wants to.

Question: Can it?

Answer: Of course it can.

Question: What about the Governor-General?

Answer: The constitution-making body will be free to deal with that question as it chooses.

Question: What will be the power reserved to the British?

Answer: There will be no power reserved at all, but there will be a Treaty by which the Government of the Indian Union will undertake to carry on the protection of the minority communities which has been promised them.

Question: Will Imperial troops be retained in this country?

Answer: No Imperial troops will be retained in this country except at the request of or by agreement with the new Indian Union or Unions.

Question: Will the Indian Union have the right to take expropriation measures?

Answer: The Union will be free to take all measures which are open to a sovereign State to take.

Question: Exactly at what stage does the British Government propose to leave this country?

Answer: As soon as the constitution-making body has framed a new constitution to take the place of the old one, the British Government undertakes to accept and implement the new one; and the moment the new constitution comes into operation, the changeover takes place.

Question: Will India be represented at the Peace Conference?

Answer. Certainly.

Question: Can you tell us clearly what you are going to give us? What is required is one simple word, 'freedom.'

Answer We used what we thought simple, 'full self-government.' We followed it by a definition which we believed would convey the right meaning. There is no conceivable doubt that this allows complete and absolute self-determination and self-government for India.

Question Now that this Declaration has been made, is there any difficulty in the way of India participating in the Atlantic Charter?

Answer: None at all.

#### COMMITMENT HELD INTACT

These proposals were subsequently rejected by the chief Indian political parties. (The various grounds advanced for that rejection are discussed later on.)

In disappointment and possibly some degree of vexation, Sir Stafford declared that since the offer was not accepted it had been withdrawn.

This statement was subsequently corrected in the House of Commons where the proposals were declared to be a declaration of policy and plan and a commitment of His Majesty's Government. The offer remained open to the Indians to accept if and when they chose.

In June of 1945 the Viceroy, Viscount Wavell, called the leaders of Indian political parties into a conference and again confirmed that His Majesty's Government was committed to complete autonomy for India. As a part of the process for achieving that autonomy, he undertook the establishment of a more representative and responsible government at the center. He invited party leaders to participate in that government. His proposals were not accepted, but he made it plain, once more, that Britain's commitment was valid.

In September, 1945, the British Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee, and Lord Wavell, made simultaneous statements in London and New Delhi in which they declared that His Majesty's Government was determined to proceed with the formation of a self-governing Indian state whose character and relationship to the other states in the Commonwealth should be decided by Indians themselves.

#### THE WORD "INDEPENDENCE"

In February, 1946, with the announcement that a mission from the British Cabinet would be dispatched to India, Mr. Attlee declared that

the purpose of that mission was to discover a framework within which independence for India could be achieved. This was the first time that the term independence was directly applied in declarations of British policy. In effect, however, an offer of independence had been made in the proposals of 1942. The Cabinet mission, composed of Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade, and A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, subsequently made it plain that they did not propose to stay within the framework of the War Cabinet proposals in their search for the means by which an Indian union could be achieved. They made it equally plain, however, that the objective of their mission was self-government for India. The word "independence" was used repeatedly in their discussions and declarations.

Thus, the British political commitment gradually grew from Queen Victoria's modest assertion that Indians would be "impartially admitted to office" to the declaration of a British Prime Minister and a Cabinet mission that India was to be an independent state. In the course of that gradual growth, there has been, significantly, no repudiation of any of the previous affirmations that had been made. Each stage went somewhat further than its predecessors, and whereas in the time of Queen Victoria any statement about Indian independence would have been regarded as fantastic, in 1946 it seemed inevitable and logical.

In the approach to a change in India's constitutional status, there are, then, points of departure. The first is that the Indians want to get rid of the British; the second is that the British are committed to get rid of the Indians. Under those circumstances it would seem that it ought to be easy to find a way in which an objective to which both sides are agreed could be carried out. In actual practice, however, it has proved to be extremely difficult, because there are also some other fixed elements in the Indian situation.

#### THE PROBLEM OF METHOD

Of major importance has been the British insistence that the process of withdrawal should follow a definite pattern. In the Round Table conferences of the Thirties, it was repeatedly declared to be the fixed British position that the form of government to be established in India must

eventually be determined by Indians. A federal union had to be achieved, in the British view, through the Indians' desire to unite. The formation of such a union, and that involved the composition of domestic differences, came to be regarded as a condition precedent for any transfer of sovereignty.

This British position, from the legal point of view, was that instruments of government that represented the Indian people had to be created by Indians before residual sovereignty could be transferred by the people of the United Kingdom to the people of India. The British thesis was that the transfer of sovereignty itself was a constitutional act of the utmost importance and that sovereignty could not be transferred to a vacuum. There was no such thing in the British mind as declaring India to be an independent political state until the form of that state had already been determined by Indian agreement.

This point of view was not merely legalism. It had many practical applications. The British had made a very large political investment in India. There was, functioning under British Government, an entire structure for the maintenance of public order, for the election of public officers, for the collection of taxes, for the appropriation of money so collected for the increasing discharge of obligations. Reduced to its simplest terms, the sovereign people of the United Kingdom had empowered their representatives in India to see to it that the garbage was collected, that the electric lights could be turned on, and that there was a policeman on point duty at the corner. Those were normal domestic functions of a sovereign state and the British felt that they could not risk disruption of those functions by disorderly political procedure that would withdraw one sovereignty before another could be recognized to take its place. There was no recession from that fixed position even in the very broad compromises suggested by the Cabinet mission in 1946.

The continued emphasis on prior agreement and on orderly processes in the modification of India's status was influenced also by disturbed international conditions during and immediately following the war. The British had felt obliged to declare that there could be no major constitutional changes during the actual course of hostilities. After the war they felt obliged to assert that there could be no disorderly constitutional changes for very much the same reason.

A change in India's constitutional status definitely means some shift in power balance. A chaotic India would create a power vacuum. The British are apprehensive about what might be used to fill that vacuum, possibly to their disadvantage. One of the things that is part of this apprehension is the new aspect of Russian expansionism. It is no secret that there has been a political tug-of-war between Great Britain and Russia in the Afghanistan area for a number of generations. It is obvious, on the face of it, that the one overland route into India is from the northwest. During the immediate postwar period, Russia has embraced a national policy of seeking "security" by bringing a considerable number of border states very closely within the Russian orbit. After the British had seen what had happened to Outer Mongolia, Poland, Bulgaria and all the small states of the eastern Baltic, they could hardly view with any equanimity the prospect of a condition in India that would be an open invitation to a "friendly power" to set up a "friendly government."

In addition to Russian expansionism, however, there was another possible threat to the independent character of a self-governing India. This came from the growing strength of the Arab and other Muslim states. This threat became especially pertinent when it was coupled with the demand for a Muslim state in India. The Arab states are regarded as basically friendly by the British, but severe damage could be done to the British position in the Middle East if a Pan-Islamic bloc were to become unfriendly and could take advantage of a weak and disorderly India.

Thus, for reasons of strategy as well as for reasons of constitutional legality and domestic good government, the British have insisted that the formation of a functioning Indian union had to take place before the British could make a formal withdrawal from a position as vital to British security as the Indian position has been.

#### THE INDIAN STATES

A further stumbling block to a rapid British withdrawal from the Indian legal position has been the fact that a substantial part of India has a relationship to the Crown quite different from that of the Provinces.

The Indian Princely States have their own treaty status and it has been the British position that this should be modified by agreement rather than by unilateral action.

A change in sovereignty in India means, necessarily, that the Princes must give their voluntary accession to a new and different paramount power.

It was with this in mind that the accession of a requisite number of Indian States became the necessary condition precedent to federation under the India Act of 1935. The required number did not accede, and consequently the whole program of the federation of India was subsequently delayed.

There is within the Princely States not merely a wide range of political structures with vast differences in the levels of political organization, there is also a vast difference in the attitudes of the various Princes themselves. Some of them have made it very plain that they are eager to participate in a free Indian union and will accept the union as the paramount power in place of the Crown. Others have taken an opposite view, holding that their own sovereignty and their own tenure must be assured before any union can even be considered.

In at least one case, indeed, one of the Indian royal families has insisted upon a reversion to a very early status in the event that an independent Indian union were formed. This is the Royal House of Oudh. Back in 1856 the King of Oudh was deposed by the British and the Kingdom annexed and made part of what is now the United Provinces. On April 2, 1946, the descendants of the Royal House of Oudh met in the city of Lucknow in the United Provinces and voted to petition the Crown for the restoration of their status prior to 1856 in the event that India became independent. The resolution that they adopted called the attention of the British Government to a treaty with the Royal House in which it was declared that the Kingdom would revert to the Royal House "after termination of those conditions which resulted in this temporary assumption."

It is, of course, extremely unlikely that the "Kingdom of Oudh" will be reconstructed, but this is the type of claim that will be made on His Majesty's Government in the name of treaties that go all the way back to the days of Clive. It is not to be expected that His Majesty's Government will unilaterally abrogate an entire treaty structure, but at the same time the British have made it very plain that they wish to be released from these treaty commitments. It is the British position, like our own,



that a treaty represents a meeting of minds and that it can be dissolved only by agreement.

This is likely to prove to be a complex process, and the British Government has insisted, therefore, that orderly procedures must be set up that can be applied throughout an interim period.

Another fixed point in the Indian situation that has become the greatest stumbling block to the rapid consummation of independence is, of course, the division of India into religious communities. Since this division has crystallized into a direct proposal for the division of India itself, we will take it up in detail at another point. It should be noted, however, that so long as the British held the position that a substantial prior agreement was necessary to an Indian union, and so long as a major body such as the Muslims was vigorously opposed to any such prior agreement, it was impossible to make real headway in political change.

These major fixtures in points of view in India could be summarized like this:

The position of the largest political group, the Hindu-dominated Congress party, "Quit India first." It has been the thesis of this party that a declaration of independence and a transfer of sovereignty should take place before any constitutional problems were even approached.

The position of the Muslim League, "Split India first." The Muslim League has taken the position that no constitutional structures for a sovereign, unified India can be made. They hold that two nations must be evolved, one Hindu, one Muslim.

The position of the Indian Princes, "Guarantee our tenure first." Thereafter, the Princes hold, they can determine whether or not to accede to an Indian union.

The British position, "Reach an agreement and draft a constitution first." The British have declared that Indians, in agreement, should set up the instruments of government and then to the Indian people, working through those instruments, the British will be prepared to transfer sovereignty.

It is that group of four points of view that must be brought together in some form of compromise in order to effect a self-governing India.

---

## II. THE CHANGING CLASH OF OPINION

---

THE ATTITUDE OF MANY AMERICANS TOWARD INDIA'S PROBLEMS AND their solution has been influenced by the fact that those Britons who may be called unsympathetic have so frequently been cited as typical. As a result there has persisted in the American mind the fixed idea that the basic problem in respect to India's future is merely a problem of changing the British mind. It has come to be rather too casually assumed that the dragon that had to be slain was labeled "imperialism" and that once a handful of die-hard Britons could be made to see the error of their ways India's feet could be set instantly on the highway to the millennium.

This is a sizable over-simplification. In the first place, the number of Britons that is genuinely retentionist is quite small and has long since lost any ability to modify judgments about Indian policy. The morality or immorality of the imperial system and the imperial point of view has not been an issue in respect to India in Britain for twenty-five years. Britain made specific commitments to modify the imperial position and once the commitments were made, the steadfast American employment of the arts of persuasion directed to Britain was largely an argument and exhortation that was beside the point.

Unfortunately this misapprehension, on the part of many Americans, did little to improve relations between the British and ourselves. At best many Britons felt that the stream of American advice on how to deal with India was uninformed and gratuitous. When it was coupled with the suggestion that our assistance to the United Kingdom in fighting the war should be determined by the readiness of His Majesty's Government to modify its political policies, many Britons felt that some Americans were undertaking to bring about a pressure condition for which there was no reason and very little excuse. It was after some widely read publications in the United States had suggested that we might adopt a policy in respect to the British Government, specifically with reference to Lend-

Lease, of "mend your ways or else" that Mr. Churchill answered with his usual forthrightness.

"I did not become His Majesty's First Minister to preside over the liquidation of the Empire."

Curiously, Mr. Churchill's plain and rather brotherly speaking was interpreted in many quarters as a precise statement of the die-hardism to which Americans were objecting. It affords at least an interesting speculation to wonder what would have been the reaction of those same indignant Americans if Mr. Churchill had announced that he proposed to proceed forthwith with that liquidation. It is extremely difficult to picture the successful prosecution of a war for survival on the part of an island empire and at the same time see the possibility of doing away with those precise strategic and economic positions that make its defense possible. It can hardly be imagined that Mr. Churchill's clamorous opponents wanted him to start out with the abandonment of Gibraltar and Malta at the precise time we were planning a North African invasion. They could hardly suggest that the involuntary and untimely loss of the British Empire positions at Hong Kong and Singapore did us any particular good when it came to the defense of the Philippines.

The ruthless logic of Mr. Churchill's wartime declaration was completely lost on many parts of the American public who viewed the whole matter of empire relationship as a moral issue. The Empire was wrong morally in the American view because all empires were wrong morally (not, of course, including our own). Therefore, the liquidation of empire was right morally and therefore a man who said he did not propose to liquidate an empire in the middle of a war was wrong morally.

Actually, the immense modification of the wide variety of political forms loosely grouped together under the term "Empire" had already been going on for several generations. Obvious changes had been made in the status of all of the great Dominions, and obvious changes were in process for many of the other Empire structures. But these facts were not widely known to Americans and it was very much easier to accept the rather disreputable picture of empires in general that had grown up in American minds over a period of years. It was very much easier to hale the harassed Briton before the tribunal of our conscience to answer for the sins of his great-grandfather and the sins of the East India Company.

It was much easier to overlook the change in Indian-British economic relationships and to use such morally-loaded words as "self-aggrandizement," "exploitation," "plunderer of wealth," "economic slavery" and all the other nouns and adjectives that appeal to the heart instead of the head.

"HOLIER THAN THOU"

Another form in which some of that American comment, both official and otherwise, was expressed, was the too glib comparison between the Philippines and India, and the consequent contrast between what was supposed to be American and British colonial policy. This has usually taken the form of the suggestion that we Americans have indicated precisely how the problem of dependent peoples should be solved in our political program for the Philippines. The unspoken corollary is, unfortunately, "if we could do it so successfully, the British could also, if they really wished." The result has been an international holier-than-thou attitude which has provoked bad feeling. The Britons, as a rule, were too polite to remind us of the log-rolling lobbies that hammered through our Philippines independence legislation in order to slap a tariff on the chief Philippine exports. They have, for the most part, chosen not to challenge our pose of unsullied altruism. But some Britons have become slightly impatient of the casual fashion in which India and the Philippines are bracketed as obviously similar colonial areas, and we have been reminded that there are, after all, some differences in the scope of the problems.

We will do well, in the United States, to bear some of these differences in mind. Indeed, we should go further and analyze a few of them, so that when our judgments of British policy are finally established they will be free from the taint of a hasty and ungenerous generalization.

It should hardly be necessary to point out, first of all, that there is a difference in size between the Philippine archipelago and the Indian subcontinent. India is a little smaller than Europe without Russia. The Philippines is a little smaller than Italy. There are about four hundred million people in India. There are about seventeen million in the Philippines. There are more than three times as many persons in the one Indian Province of Bengal as there are in the whole of the Philippines.

This factor of sheer size is of primary importance in the economic field.

Because of the relative smallness of the Philippines it was possible to establish an economic policy, free entry of Philippine goods in the American market, that assured a steadily rising standard of living in the islands. Within one generation one export product, sugar, could account for the welfare of one-fourth of the people in the Philippines, could provide 40 per cent of the insular revenue. There was no comparable possibility for India. We were able to meet and solve the biggest of all colonial problems, the problem of poverty, with relative ease. And we could do it because we were dealing with a small population in a highly productive area and because we could offer to them what was, until 1935, an unlimited market. Manifestly, no similar course of action was possible in the case of India, and India's chief problem today remains what it has been for several centuries, the problem of abject poverty.

The second field of comparison and contrast is that of homogeneity. In the Philippines we dealt with a population that was not only much smaller, but considerably more compact than the population of India. There were, in the Philippines, several major languages and about eighty dialects. But it was possible to establish English as a *lingua franca* in two generations through a uniform system of public instruction. India has a dozen major languages, the smallest of which is larger than any of the Philippine group.

The cultural homogeneity of the Philippines was, however, one of our largest assets. We took over the Philippines after three hundred years of Spanish rule. It was a bad rule, politically, but it gave the Filipinos an essential social solidarity. It gave them uniformity of religious belief, for one thing. The Mohammedan Moros were a minority element, to be sure, but more than nine of every ten Filipinos were Christians. What this meant in terms of social organization was that the vast bulk of the population had the same code of ethics, the same system of taboos, the same way of life. And what is more, that way of life was not essentially different from our own. We could promulgate a system of laws, preserve a mode of behavior, that were part of the established and accepted mores of the community. Our rule did no violence to faith or works.

The situation in India is not only an exact opposite. It is a complex opposite. The mores of the sovereign power were resisted by the bulk of the population as foreign and unacceptable. But they were resisted in the

name of other ways of life that differed each from the other. Hindu and Muslim, Sikh and Jain, are divided among themselves in their essential concepts of life. And all were divided from the way of life of the paramount power.

The size of the minority groups is also an important factor. The Muslim group in the Philippines was always hopelessly outnumbered. It was not a tenth of the population. In India it makes up a fourth. In the Philippines, one "community" could not possibly be weighted against the

---

THE POPULATION OF INDIA BY COMMUNITIES

(CENSUS OF 1941)

(Round Numbers)

Hindus	.	255,000,000
including Scheduled Castes	49 millions	
Muslims	.	94,250,000
Christians	.	7,250,000
including Anglo-Indians	140,000	
Europeans	135,000	
Sikhs	.	5,750,000
Jains	.	1,500,000
Buddhists	.	232,000
Parsis	.	115,000
Jews	.	22,000
Tribes	.	25,000,000

---

other. It was obvious from the beginning that the Christian Filipino group would be the overwhelming majority and that the Moros would be obliged to accept its supremacy. In India, on the other hand, a Muslim leader can declare with telling effect, "A hundred million persons do not constitute a minority, they constitute a nation."

This group self-consciousness, however, with its resultant antagonism to other groups, is in part the result of the refusal of all the Indian groups really to accept the fundamental political concepts that were brought to India by the Britons. The basic thesis of Anglo-Saxon government, the validity of the rights of the individual under the proclaimed processes of constitutional law, has simply not yet been accepted in India by Hindu or Muslim.

This is, perhaps, the outstanding difference between the American colonial experience in the Philippines and the British colonial experience in India. We have dealt with completely different attitudes on the part of the indigenous population.

One reason for that difference in attitudes is the difference in the heritage under which we set to work. The United States went into the Philippines after long centuries of previous misrule. Almost any change was welcome. We were obliged to put down an insurrection, in the beginning, but it was relatively easy to live that down through a program of forthright political generosity.

In modern India, on the other hand, even the most enlightened administration and the most generous political proposals still suffer from the heritage of the misrule of the British East India Company. It cast a long shadow over subsequent relations between Indians and Britons.

This preoccupation with the past was, undoubtedly, one of the chief reasons for the Indian decision, back in 1916, to refuse co-operation to British instruments of government. This meant that the best of the Indian leaders would rule themselves out from holding office and thus acquiring the experience that was necessary for greater responsibilities, and more than that, that Indian nationalism would lose its opportunity to modify the form of British rule through direct pressure from within government itself.

This is exactly opposite to what happened in the Philippines. There the opportunity to serve in the provincial governments, the insular legislature, and the administrative departments was eagerly embraced by even the most outspoken nationalists. Manuel Quezon, who said that he would "rather live under a government run like hell by Filipinos than one run like heaven by Americans," was President of the Philippine Senate when he made that remark. It was accepted doctrine in Philippine nationalism that leaders should hold public office, that they should use that office to further the nationalist cause, and that they should change the forms of government by employing them.

The lack of a corresponding attitude on the part of the majority party in India has been one of the greatest handicaps to political growth. The very fervor of Indian nationalism has often been self-defeating because of the inability to effect working compromises and to espouse changes that, while short of the ultimate goal, still represented substantial advances. The Indian nationalist thesis that no bread is better than half a loaf has necessarily resulted in political starvation.

These are facts with which Americans should make themselves fa-

miliar before they apply the Philippine-Indian comparison. There is little doubt that American political policy in the Philippines was fresh, imaginative and successful. British policy in India has often been slow, timid and rigid. But the materials to which the two policies have been applied have been vastly different, and the conditions under which they were set into operation gave the United States all the advantages while they imposed great burdens on Britain.

The repeated American emphasis on the contrast was, therefore, often regarded, not merely as uninformed, but basically unsympathetic.

But what probably irritated the Britons more than anything else was the fact that most of the American wrath about India was expended upon conditions that had already been changed. The diatribes against the inflexibility of British policy and the presumptive "stand-pattism" of the "Empire" as a political instrument could not appear to liberal Britons as anything other than a systematic flogging of a very dead horse.

#### LAW AND NOT MORALS

What had happened in the course of the last twenty-five years was that the problem of the disposition of India's political future had ceased to become a simple issue in morals. It had become, instead, a complex problem in constitutional law. The major difficulty was not that of persuading wilful Britons to give up something that they held dear, but of persuading a large group of Indians to assist in formulating the means by which India's situation could be changed. The problem had ceased to be a problem of "if" and had become a question of "how."

In the approach to this complex problem the British were not assisted by the largest organized political group in India. The Congress party had some years earlier made an important decision. It had been determined that the fixed mode of operation of the party was to stand aside from the functions of government and to attempt to bring pressure upon the government from without. One of the inevitable conclusions of this decision was a sterilization of political thought within the party itself. The whole problem of how to change a government was laid aside in the clamorous demand that the government should be changed. Constitutional questions were rather lightly brushed aside, and when representatives of Britain asked for constructive proposals from leaders of Indian



political thought they were met with the calm statement that those problems would settle themselves, once the British had actually retired. The Simon Commission, for example, undertaking to explore the basis for a solution, was virtually boycotted by the major political parties. In the Round Table Conferences the actual working proposals for the formation of a government and the changing of a government had to come exclusively from the British side of the table. Proposals were then subjected to the closest possible scrutiny by Indians to find what basis, if any, could be discovered for their rejection, not for their modification or adoption.

Possibly the most important single contribution of Indian ideas in the field of constitutional proposals was that made by the Non-Party Committee headed by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, that met in 1944 and drafted its recommendations in 1945. This was really a constitutional recommendation. It carried within itself a large number of constructive plans for the creation of an Indian union. But both of the major Indian parties boycotted the Sapru Committee, and Gandhi, indeed, gave his blessing to its hearings only with the stipulation that no Congress party member should be associated with it.

Similarly, the only vigorous political proposal to come out of a long period of Muslim League growth was the proposal for the partition of India. This was, at least, one definite concrete political program. But the Muslim League, also, was not inclined to fill in the specific legal and constitutional details, but rather, to assert merely that agreement to Pakistan was a first essential step.

This characteristic sterility of Indian political party thought was not the product of political ineptitude or any lack of skill. It was the product, rather, of a frame of mind that had been established for a long time.

This attitude of steadfast refusal to undertake any responsibility for the presentation of workable alternatives if British proposals were rejected had enormous advantages to the practicing revolutionary. It gave him a pat answer to any question that was raised. The root of all evil was the British *Raj* and obviously what was necessary was to extirpate that root. If a question were asked, "How can an Indian Union be formulated?" the answer was amazingly simple. "Get rid of the British *Raj* and the form of the Union will be easy." "On what ground?" And the answer was: "The ground will be determined when the *Raj* has retired."

That simplicity in some instances made the practice of revolution a profitable vocation, especially outside of India. No responsibilities had to be accepted, and it was relatively easy to determine what courses of action were to be proclaimed by simply making sure that one was sufficiently opposed to existing authority. Some of the Indians who lived abroad and were consistent and vigorous spokesmen for Indian "freedom" found that they could do very well in presenting India's case to their own satisfaction and profit without ever being obliged to come to grips with the practical facts of how Indian political change was to be brought about.

These apostles of Indian freedom were encouraged, indeed, by some of the attitudes of Indian leaders whom they held in the highest esteem. There is no question, for example, of Gandhi's enormous influence. He is venerated by millions. At certain periods even profoundly intellectual persons like Pandit Nehru have laid aside their critical faculties and have followed Gandhi's leadership, depending, as they said, upon the Mahatma's "inner sense." But Gandhi's profound preoccupation with the spiritual issues involved was usually so great that he had neither the time nor the inclination to come to grips with precise and practical problems.

#### ANARCHY AND GOD

When Gandhi initiated his "Quit India" campaign in 1942 he was asked repeatedly what would be the precise political structures that he proposed to substitute for those that had been set up by His Majesty's Government and were functioning. Gandhi replied amiably, and with some assurance:

"If we are left to ourselves we will readily find a way. Some people would call that anarchy. I prefer to call it God."

That answer was doubtless satisfactory to Gandhi, satisfactory to millions of his followers and satisfactory to the ardent revolutionaries, but it was eminently unsatisfactory to a very large number of persons who did not regard anarchy and God as synonymous. In that latter category came His Majesty's Government and the Viceroy in Council.

It is particularly in reaction to this nonconstructive aspect of Indian political thought that the British have insisted on the development of

established procedures in making any constitutional changes. Unfortunately, however, they have insisted on changes that are essentially Occidental in character. They have insisted upon the legal approach to the problem of the drafting of a definitive charter with a precise limitation of prerogatives and all the direct structural procedure that goes into constitution-making. On the other hand, in accord with the old established principle of noninterference with religious and customary law, and with the somewhat more newly accepted principle of real self-determination, they have insisted that the actual agreements within the structure suggested must come from Indians themselves. They are asking, in short, for an essentially Oriental settlement of an Oriental problem within the rigid framework of Occidental conceptions. The result has been an inevitable maladjustment in the minds of Indians and an inability to arrive at a suitable basis for settlement.

Much more important than that, however, is the fact that because the British were insistent on the use of these structures and because their use was obviously so extremely difficult there immediately arose a ground for a challenge to British sincerity. Many Indians and many of their American friends immediately took the position that the British insisted upon an agreement among Indians as a condition precedent to their withdrawal precisely because they knew that an agreement among Indians would not be reached. And so another and very famous "dead horse," the old "Divide and Rule," was enthusiastically brought out and received a tremendous flogging.

#### "DIVIDE AND RULE"

It goes without saying that there was a long period in the growth and development of British political structures in which "Divide and Rule" was an accepted procedure. But that time has passed. The modern conception, not only in Britain but elsewhere, is "Unite to Rule."

There is no question but that the assumption of political authority by Great Britain in India was made immeasurably easier by the enormous divisions that existed in India. The fact that the Mogul Empire had fallen into a condition of anarchy, the fact that the Maratha kingdoms had successfully revolted against the Muslims, the fact that the Sikhs had been able to set up their own integral state, the fact that the whole of

India was divided into many warring principalities, each of which was eager to be set against some other, made the problem of setting up British authority quite different from what it would have been if Britain had faced a united India. Battles for British supremacy were fought by one group of Indians under British leadership against another group of Indians under French leadership. Divide and Rule was certainly the order of the day, but Divide and Rule ceased to be the order of the day when division ceased to be profitable.

Modern history in India is the history of gigantic attempts at unification. There has been physical unification, successful to a relatively high degree. There has been political unification, partially successful, in British India. There has been a problematical spiritual unification in the development of the idea that there is really such a thing as a potential Indian state, an Indian citizenship, an Indian nationality. It is against that background of progressive unification that modern political division along religious lines has suddenly become acute.

The British, of course, did not create the division between Muslims and Hindus. It was a self-conscious division on the part of the groups themselves for four hundred years before any Briton ever set foot in India. What has happened is that a very old division has been resurrected, brought to bear acutely upon the political scene by leaders and individuals, conscious of their own identity, as members of minority groups. It is quite possible that the reappearance of such a division in a sharpened form may have given some satisfaction to some British individuals who hoped to see a permanent retention of British rule in India. The worst that could be said of them is that they made use of a dissension that already existed. They did not create the dissension, if for no other reason than that they did not have to. It was already there. Such individuals, however, and the body of thought that they reflected, have long since been left behind. Under the present conditions, the communal divisions and all the trappings that have gone with it, such as weighted representation and allocated seats, are simply one more terrible headache to Britons who are trying to work out agreed processes of constitutional law.

## WHY HAVE A CONSTITUTION?

But it is, in the British view, precisely because these conditions exist that the processes of agreement must be correspondingly sharp and adequate. Why have a constitution for India at all? Why have an agreed and written basis for a federal union? Precisely because the claims and counterclaims of various groups that must be parties to such a constitution require definition and acceptance if endless strife is to be avoided. It is because there are so many areas of disagreement that the areas of agreement must be precisely defined.

The question of the specific powers to be allocated to the union or to be reserved to its constituent parts is not a mere exercise for the textbook. It is an attempt to define and set out the agreed terms upon which men can live together peacefully and work constructively, even when they are considerably at variance over many matters of great importance.

There is a vicious circle at work here, as the British have long since discovered. The existence of communal division is the one thing that makes constitutional agreement imperative. But at the same time the sharpness of the division makes constitutional argument almost impossible.

There are two ways in which this circle can be broken.

First, the British can retire from the scene altogether. They can retire without the formation of a constitutional union and allow the divided elements to fight it out. Gandhi suggested this course back in 1942, saying, "We will probably fight like cats and dogs when the British leave." Such a course of action is extremely distasteful to an honest person in whom there is bred a profound respect for law. Moreover, the prospect of a civil war in India is horrifying to anyone with reasonable humanitarian tendencies. In addition to that, however, the prospect of chaotic and strife-torn India is profoundly disturbing to persons who have discovered that a regional sore spot in the world can become a serious threat to the peace and security of persons who may happen to be 10,000 miles away from it. For these reasons it is unlikely that the British will take this particular way out of the difficulty, however tempting it might be simply to say, "We will take you at your word." Moreover, such a course of action means a violation or abrogation of treaty commitments.

It means repudiation of pledges to minorities. It means, in short, a moral abdication in the face of a difficult situation. As such, it is essentially repugnant to moral persons. It is even undesirable from the point of view of those persons who realize only too well that such a course of action would call down on the heads of the British the vials of wrath based on charges of total irresponsibility from those selfsame persons who have clamored for twenty-five years that the British take some such course of action.

The second alternative in this constitutional deadlock is the imposition of a solution from without. This can be done. His Majesty's Government can draft an organic law for an Indian union and can impose it upon India. This is, in fact, what was done in the India Act of 1935. It was suggested, also, as the only way out by the Sapru Committee. If the terms of such an organic law are unacceptable to a substantial body, the Muslims, for example, the British will have to implement those terms by force. That means that the imposition of a solution may possibly present the amazing paradox of a large foreign force in a country to impose on that country its right to be politically independent. And all Indian groups have repudiated such a course.

Quite apart from that, however, the British are as well aware as we or the Indians are that "freedom" cannot be established by imposition. Freedom is, in itself, an organic thing. It must be achieved. It must exist not merely on the statute books; it must exist in the hearts and minds of men. Britain can dictate the political independence of India, but Britain cannot dictate the freedom of Indians. An imposed solution, therefore, while it might have the practical purpose of providing machinery under which freedom could voluntarily be achieved, would not, in itself, achieve that freedom. This is the reason for the insistence that the basis for the Indian union must come from Indians. It must be the product of Indian good will, not an arbitrary British political synthesis.

These are some of the difficulties with which His Majesty's Ministers were obliged to cope when they went to India with instructions to find a way to provide for Indian independence. These difficulties are part of India's political and emotional climate.

---

### III. THE POLITICAL AND EMOTIONAL CLIMATE

---

IT SHOULD BE APPARENT BY THIS TIME THAT INDIA'S VARIOUS DIFFERENCES are not susceptible to prompt and enthusiastic compromise. There are large problems to be ironed out, and the process of solving them will necessarily require a very considerable degree of give and take.

If there is to be successful federation in India, there must be an accord between Muslims and Hindus; some common ground for a meeting of self-governing Provinces and Princely States; a working political arrangement between Indians as Indians and Britons as Britons. Success must depend on a large measure of good will and good faith.

Unfortunately, the political and emotional climate in India is almost exactly the reverse of good will and good faith. All of the discussions about the future of India's political status have been carried on in a miasma of recrimination and distrust.

This first came to very conspicuous public attention throughout the world at the time of the Round Table Conferences, beginning in 1930. There was a complete failure to reach a meeting of minds on most of the important points, both between Britons and Indians, and between Indians and Indians. Basic issues such as the place of religious communities or the Untouchables had to be settled by unilateral British action. And when the so-called "Communal Award" was made by Ramsay MacDonald it promptly produced the most desperate of Gandhi's numerous fasts unto death.

When the War Cabinet's proposals were brought to India in 1942 there was a confident expectation everywhere except in India that it would be a relatively simple matter to bring together a group of reasonable men who would joyfully accept a very substantial advance in India's political life. Instead of that, the discussions that were carried on rapidly degenerated into haggling over details that eventually bore less resemblance to a

political conference than to an Oriental bazaar. The basic thing that became evident as those discussions went on was the fact that there was resistance to any British proposal, not merely to this one. The reason for that attitude is deep-seated. The Indians actually rejected the basic idea that the British would offer a proposal as generous as the one in 1942 without its having some obscure and malign significance.

It has already been said that Indian nationalism is partially grievance nationalism. There is an almost incredible undercurrent of Indian ill will toward Britain mixed up in all the desire for self-government. This is the more remarkable because of the fact that thousands of the associations of Indians and Britons have been extremely warm and pleasant. The individual Indian coming in contact with the individual Briton, as a rule, comes to have a very high respect and regard for his Occidental associate. But Indians in the mass and Indians as a political mind dislike and distrust the whole of the British in the mass, and in the mind, and are vigorously and passionately and violently disposed against the British *Raj*.

Some of this feeling can be and should be attributed to mistakes that have been made by the individual British administrators. Some of those mistakes were part of the policy of the whole East India Company regime. The Company was usually high handed, and some of its servants were dishonest. The story has been handed down from generation to generation in India that Indians have been robbed of their patrimony by the predatory Britons. There is just enough truth in this partial truth to make it stick. The result, however, is that the individual Indian can, with what appears to him to be unimpeachable logic, attribute all of his woes to the imposition of the British *Raj*. If he has been robbed of his patrimony by the predatory Briton, obviously he must be distrustful of any government that Britons set up. If he finds it inconvenient to pay his taxes, it is against the British *Raj* that his resentment is directed. If he wishes to make a demonstration in contravention of public order, it is the British *Raj* that puts him in jail, not his quite deliberate violation of the law.

Americans sometimes find it difficult to appreciate the scope and intensity of this feeling. When I first went down to Bombay, in 1942, there was a story making the rounds that was supposed to indicate this attitude. It was, no doubt, apocryphal, but it was widely employed to demonstrate to the newcomer what he could expect to find in India.



It was told that an Indian had gone to the races to bet his last ten rupees. In the first race he put his entire stake on the favorite at four to one, and collected his forty rupees. He continued to bet on well-liked and established entrants and found himself in a streak of luck. Four to one, five to one, six to one, he continued to multiply his money, placing all of it each time. By late afternoon he had 10,000 rupees. He determined on an all-or-nothing plunge. He picked the most fantastic outsider in the race at a hundred to one. The horse had never won anything in his life, but this was the gambler's day. If he could bring that one off he would have a million rupees. He played to win. As the horses went to the post he regaled himself with visions of his opulent retirement. There was a lot he could do with a million rupees.

The horse did exactly what could have been expected of him. In a field of ten he finished a bad tenth. The Indian ground his ticket under his heel with a single savage comment:

"Bah! British imperialism."

The story is an exaggeration, but like the complaint against British depredation it has just enough partial truth in it to make it current. It illustrates an attitude that has been carried over into the widest possible fields.

When national calamity overtakes the country, resentment naturally rises. When India was threatened by a foreign invasion it was the proclaimed doctrine of a very considerable part of the Indians, and expressed repeatedly by Gandhi himself, that it was only the association of India with the British *Raj* that made India vulnerable. Gandhi solemnly told his followers that if the British were to retire from India the Japanese would have no reason for attacking it.

#### THE PLACE OF FAMINE

Similarly the famine of 1943 and famine of 1946 were frequently ascribed by the Indians to British rule and nothing more. Of course, in 1943 there were cyclones and floods in western Bengal and disruption of communications and failure of the Burmese rice imports because Burma was in the hands of the Japanese. Moreover, a considerable part of the government ineptitude lay within the Government of Bengal, itself, whose administrators were Indians. None of those factors, however, weighed in the popular mind with the fact that the Government had a responsibility

for the well-being of the governed and that when famine occurred that responsibility was not discharged. There were many causes for famine and governmental ineptitude was one of them. But in the Indian mind they were all lumped together and charged against the account of the British *Raj*.

The same thing was true in 1946. The inability of the Government of India to obtain sufficient food shipments from abroad to make up for the deficit caused by cyclones and drouth was attributed by a great many Indian political leaders to inability and apathy on the part of the governing group. Now, naturally, a government that is made responsible in the minds of the public for all of the ills to which flesh is heir can hardly be expected to enjoy the unlimited confidence of that public.

In addition to this general charge, there have been specific instances of maladministration that have had a profound effect upon the Indian mind. The worst of these, in modern times, was the Amritsar Massacre of the early Twenties. A British officer, feeling himself insecure in his position and mistrustful of recent political concessions that had been made to Indians, ordered his troops to fire into an Indian crowd, in an enclosed area, that he thought represented a threat. The act was inexcusable and its repercussions were terrible. The officer in question was promptly cashiered from the Army and censured in the House of Commons, but the House of Lords refused to concur in the censure. Some misguided persons in the United Kingdom even started to raise a subscription to make up for the pension the officer had lost. The result is that many Indians for twenty-five years have been pointing to the Amritsar Massacre as typical of British rule in India. A thousand good things were wiped out by one bad and stupid thing.

This was an individual case, but it happened on a very large scale. Now there have been many individual cases on a very small scale. Thoughtless Britons have transgressed on the personal or property rights of individual Indians. They have spoken sharply when a gentle word would have been much more appropriate. They have arrogated to themselves rights and privileges not shared by the community as a whole, and have made the individuals with whom they have come in contact conscious of the differences in their positions. That consciousness has rankled over a long period of time and the individual Indians who have had an unhappy or

unfavorable experience find it very easy to generalize about the whole aspect of alien rule. And it is impossible to criticize them for such an attitude.

Some of these grievances have been inflamed by enlargement. In some cases the individual nationalist, seeking to gain a following, has played deliberately upon the grievance sense. This also has been true of some publications that have played upon grievances to make sensations to get circulation. But the important thing is that the grievances were there to play on. Individual mistakes that could have been overlooked in an atmosphere of complete equality are not overlooked when there is a consciousness of superior and inferior. So all of the individual complaints and many of the large and public complaints have been gathered up into a frame of mind. This frame of mind has become a national attribute.

#### GOOD OUT OF BRITAIN?

When the War Cabinet proposals were made in 1942, an American press correspondent who was entertained by Gandhi immediately asked Gandhi for his over-all reaction. Gandhi shrugged his shoulders and said, quite simply:

"Can any good come out of Britain?"

That answer seemed astonishing to the American who was thinking about the terms of the proposal. It was, however, quite intelligible, even logical, to Indians; and Gandhi knew that it would be. It was perfectly obvious on the face of it that a great deal of good had come out of Britain, including Gandhi himself, who was British-educated. But he had quickly and skillfully reflected a frame of mind with which the Indian could be expected to approach the problem of his relationship to the British *Raj*.

It is apparent also that behind some of the ill will in India is a basic philosophic refusal on the part of the Indians to accept some of the main theses of Western culture. The British set up their political rule in India many centuries after the pattern of Indian society had been very firmly fixed. India had its own characteristic and very great indigenous culture, its own concepts of the relation of the governor to the governed, its own body of laws, its own body of ethical concepts. The Western world brought into India a completely different culture. India has, by and large, not accepted it. It has, on the contrary, rejected and resisted it, as it had

a perfect right to do. India has clung tenaciously to legal, ethical and religious concepts quite at variance from those of the governing power.

This resistance may translate itself in the life of the individual Indian into very simple sentiments. In the February, 1946, riots in Bombay, for example, it was unsafe for anyone, Indian or European, to go along the streets wearing a European hat. The idea of European headwear had been emotionally resisted by the Indian. A turban was all right. A fez would be tolerable, the square cotton cloth cap of the Congress party was preferable, but European headaddress was anathema. It symbolized, in a very simple way, a culture that the Indian did not want.

Now that type of resistance has been carried in the Indian mind through the whole range of the philosophical approach to life. The Indian does not want to be Westernized, and as the result of his determination not to lose his cultural identity, he has quite naturally magnified the significance and importance of all the various aspects of his life that differentiate it from the life of the Occident. Gandhi, for example, has insisted that before the machine age was introduced by the industrialized Western world, India was a land of milk and honey. Hand-spinning was the answer to India's economic problems, and a complete negation of all of the external aspects of Western culture was, in Gandhi's philosophy, the only possible road to happiness.

The conspicuous clash of religious tenets was used to point up the assertion that there was a truly golden Indian age to which Indians could return. The regime of the Mogul Akbar was pictured, even by Hindus, as one that was benign, tolerant and gracious. The ancient glories of India were consistently held up as the mark of a total social achievement. The individual Indian was thus taught to believe that his was a glorious country in which poverty, strife, disease and even discord were all unknown until they were introduced by this malevolent British *Raj*. That is the frame of mind to which Gandhi was appealing when he said, "Can any good come out of Britain?" The Indian, by his resistance to the culture of the Western world has, quite naturally, magnified the defects of that culture and multiplied in his own mind the virtues of the traditional Indian culture that is opposed to it.

That may be right or wrong from the abstract moral point of view, but from a practical point of view it is one of the facts in the case. Some

of the external trappings of Western civilization managed to get a firm hold in India. Despite Gandhi's objections, the machine is in India to stay. It is also likely that despite a great deal of quiet and almost subterranean opposition the system of Occidental jurisprudence is in India to stay. But it still remains to be seen if the basic political, social and philosophic tenets of the Western world have really been grafted on the older root stock of the Indian mind. Perhaps they should not be. But the failure makes a synthesis of cultures difficult.

It should be made clear and emphatic that a generalization like that does not apply to many individual Indians. There are thousands of them who are in the very best sense of the word citizens of the whole world, Western and Eastern. There are many, many Indians who, to our own everlasting good and profit, have made a complete synthesis of the finest things in their culture and the best things that could be taken from ours. That synthesis, however, has not been made by India in the mass, and it is mass resistance to an alien culture that has helped to create much of the present atmosphere of profound distrust.

#### THE ATTITUDE OF BRITONS

Thus far we have been discussing some of the causes for Indian mistrust of the British. There has been conspicuous mistrust on the other side as well. Many Britons have felt and have said that the Indians were not competent to set up a good government of their choosing. Many Britons, and some Americans, after a brief survey of the Indian scene, have said that the system of personal rule, the idea of autocracy, was the one thing suited to the Indian mentality and that to attempt to give the Indian anything more was too idealistic to be practicable.

There has been, on the British side, a reluctance to move rapidly in the advancement of Indians and there has been also a reluctance to share equally with Indians in many of the simpler tasks of going about one's daily business. Many Britons, in the way in which they have ordered their own lives, have made the differences between themselves and the Indians as conspicuous as possible instead of minimizing those differences and trying to reduce them to a good working common denominator.

One of the first reasons for this British attitude necessarily lies in the disparity of numbers between the Britons and the Indians. In the earlier

period, in the growth of the British-Indian relationship, the Britons were always in a hopeless minority. One good solid Indian rebellion could have wiped them out overnight. The consciousness of their precarious position created a very strong defense mechanism. It was characteristic of the out-numbered group to build itself stockades. The British built them, not only physically, but also in the moral and philosophical sense. The Briton took his own world to India with him, and because he felt that it was one of his most treasured possessions, he tried to keep it inviolate. This is the explanation, for example, of the exclusive British "club" that has caused so much heart-searching among many observers of the Indian scene. The club was an extension of the Briton's home, and he undertook to preserve its sacrosanctity. In so doing he gave the immediate impression that there was a deep-seated racial discrimination involved. That is not necessarily true. The discrimination was on the basis of the "British-ness" or "homeside-ness" of the persons involved. Americans, for example, were not invited to join the British Club in Manila, and while they might have called it snobbishness, they certainly could not call it racial discrimination.

The Briton took with him to India also many of his fixed behavior patterns. He had his tea, whether having it had any relationship to the life of the community in which he lived or not. He also took with him the fixed conviction that anything that originated in Britain was, *ipso facto*, superior to anything that originated anywhere else. Consequently, at great cost and at great inconvenience, many things were brought half-way around the world that could have been obtained locally at half the price and one-fiftieth of the trouble. All of this was part of a defense mechanism that arose from the unconscious realization that the Briton was a member of a very small group charged with a profound responsibility and not always able to execute it to his own satisfaction.

There have been many sneers at Kipling's "White Man's Burden," but in actual fact Kipling was not setting up a moral and evangelical shibboleth; he was reflecting a British frame of mind. The important thing about the "White Man's Burden" was that the Briton was extremely conscious of the fact that he was sustaining it. That consciousness, of course, did not make for a mutuality of trust as far as the Indian was concerned.

## BRITISH WOMEN

Another vital factor in the determination of the relationship between the British and the Indian communities has been the position of British women. Prior to the Mutiny, British women did not come out to India as a rule, and their menfolk were in the country for five, ten, or twenty year periods. Naturally, the British men contracted alliances with Indian women. This direct, personal intercourse between the two groups not only laid the foundation for the present Anglo-Indian community, but also provided a way in which there could be a genuine interchange of ideas and emotions on the basis of equality. Racial admixture, whether good or bad, changes the outlook of the individuals who are parties to it. After the Mutiny, however, with the establishment of order and security in India, it became the practice for Britons to bring their womenfolk with them or to send for them when they had established themselves in India. The result was a self-contained British community, and before long the women, and eventually the men, began to frown heavily on any personal association of one community with the other. The mixed marriage came under the most rigid social taboo, and the Anglo-Indian lost most of his preferred stature in the community. The result was to make the British community more completely British and the Indian community more self-consciously Indian. This created the sharpest sort of social distinctions, and the Briton eventually came to regard with a certain social distrust any person of mixed blood who attempted to classify himself as a European. It is probably not correct to say, as some persons have, that the British woman is the author of class and color consciousness in India. It is correct, however, to say that the relationship between Britons and Indians was modified enormously when Britons in India became a part of British family units and not individuals in an Indian society.

Another important factor entered into these relationships. The character of the British operations in India was, from the beginning, largely commercial. The Indians with whom Britons came most largely in contact were those with whom they proposed to do business or the Indian clerks and servants whom they employed as translators, messengers and menials. As a result many Britons formed judgments of Indians as a whole based on an acquaintance with a very limited class of Indians. The

clerk, the messenger and the menial are not representative of any society at its best, in India or elsewhere. But it was this class with whom many Britons came most conspicuously into contact. The result was the application of the term *babu*—that is, a clerk—to entire frames of mind that were supposed to characterize Indian society. The Briton, often unconsciously, adopted a classification of *babu* for many Indians who did not belong in the *babu* class. The result was an assumption that only the tiniest part of the Indian community could really be depended upon as competent or as having the capacity for a genuinely equal status.

#### IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

This problem was made more difficult by the reluctance of Britons to admit a very considerable number of Indians to the Indian Civil Service in the days when it was being set up. The Indianization of the services came much too late to have a really good effect on the relationship of the two communities. Similarly the relative tardiness with which legislative bodies were organized had the effect of marking off the difference between the ruler and the ruled to a conspicuous degree. This resulted in an almost unconscious restriction of privileges to the Briton and an enormous differential inflation of the Briton's sense of knowledge and importance in the country. He felt, in many cases, that he was a law unto himself, since an adequate instrument of law had not been set up by Indians.

The American experience in the Philippines offers a sharp contrast at this point, and it is an experience of which thoughtful Britons have often been envious, provided Americans didn't talk too much about it. The creation of a Filipino elected legislature, as early as 1907, gave a special character of equality under law, and the progressive transfer of positions in the public services to Filipinos gave a sense of joint responsibility to the two communities. The result was that nationalism and its inevitable clash with constituted authority in the Philippines was not marked on the Filipino side by a sense of grievance, nor was it marked on the American side by the unconscious assumption of a complete superiority. Thus great change was made possible without the same degree of recrimination that has existed in India.

In more recent times, the Briton's attitude of mistrust in respect to India has been increased by the courses of action that have been taken by



Indian nationalists. The whole idea of non-cooperation, as introduced by Gandhi, is extremely distasteful to the Briton who often makes a fetish of public order and the sanctity of law. Non-cooperation is a deliberate attempt to make all law inoperative by the simple assumption that law does not exist. That idea is completely shattering to the British mind, and eventually the Briton comes, but unconsciously, to regard it as a conspiracy against all the things in life that make a society possible.

#### ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WAR

The attitude of Gandhi toward the war in which Britain became involved in 1939 was also a factor in creating in the minds of many Britons a profound dislike and distrust. The British were acutely conscious of the fact they were fighting a very bitter war for survival. They felt in many instances that there was a completely unreasonable lack of sympathy on the part of the Indians for their obvious predicament. In individual cases that could easily form an extremely bitter background for any approach to constitutional change, or for viewing even day-to-day political problems.

Here is an illuminating experience in that respect that happened to me. Shortly after I reached India in 1942, I was invited to have breakfast with a distinguished civil servant who had a long record of progressive and forward-looking approach to Indian problems. He was by no means unsympathetic toward most Indian points of view.

When I arrived that morning, I was stunned to learn that this British official had just received a telegram saying that his youngest son had been killed in action in a flight over Germany. He insisted, however, in going through with the breakfast in the best tradition of carrying on. While we were talking, the morning newspaper came in. Its headline was devoted to an interview with Gandhi on the war in Europe. Gandhi's statement was that both sides were wrong, that he could not support either, and that he could not help but hope that both would lose.

"And as far as I am concerned," said my host, "I hope they put him in jail and keep him there until he rots."

This is a simple example of the way in which conflicting points of view that may seem abstract can be anything but that when they come into the realm of personal feelings and sacrifices. To the Briton the war was a terribly personal thing, a cause to which everything had to be devoted.

To the Indian, on the other hand, the war appeared to be an opportunity to wring additional concessions from a country that was obviously fighting for its survival. This Indian point of view was, in the abstract, quite sound nationalism but to many Britons it became an indefensible personal treachery. The unwillingness of the Congress party to support the war effort was to many Britons the mark of the indifference of Indian political leaders to the fate of individual Britons.

Some Britons have taken a similar point of view in respect to the differences between Hindus and Muslims in India. They feel that each group has tried to prosecute its own advantage at the expense of the other and at the expense of the British Government and that neither is genuinely committed to the welfare of the country as a whole. Consequently, there has been an attitude in some quarters that little is to be hoped for in the formation of an Indian union when a major party persists in placing immediate political advantage above the progress of the country as a whole. Thus, while the British have been disinclined to make an arbitrary compromise of differences on their own responsibility, and to impose upon India what they believe to be an equitable settlement, they have shown a growing impatience with the partisan distrust that has made an objective Indian view of any proposals impossible.

There are some Britons who have lived in India for a considerable number of years who do not believe that Indians in the mass are capable of accepting the democratic mode of government and making it succeed. They distrust Indian political demands and attribute to individual Indian political leaders motives of personal aggrandizement rather than motives of genuine patriotism. Fortunately, this point of view does not prevail. It does, however, influence the attitude of certain individuals and it evokes on the part of Indians a corresponding mistrust.

These various points of view are elements in a political climate in which all changes must be discussed. It is obviously not a healthy climate. There is too little good will and too much ill will. It remains to be seen if the achievements of conscientious statesmanship can overcome these handicaps. It remains to be demonstrated that careful political planning and honest political commitment can overcome the difficulties imposed by differences of opinion and by an atmosphere of dislike and distrust.

---

## IV. THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

---

INDIA'S POLITICAL PROBLEMS, OF COURSE, DO NOT EXIST IN A WATERTIGHT compartment. The kind of government that can be set up must necessarily be dependent, in part, on the character of the country that is to be governed. In order, therefore, to take any adequate sort of stock of India's political prospects we are obliged to review briefly some of the economic and sociological conditions that must have an important bearing on the success or failure of any political experiment.

India is no paradise by any definition. If its political problems are difficult, its economic ones are appalling and its sociological ones are woeful. India, by and large, is poverty-stricken, maladjusted to modern economic life, ill-prepared for the successful large-scale operation of what we consider to be the inevitably desirable political instruments.

India is a big country. It has an area of a little over 1,500,000 square miles. That is about half the area of the United States. But even so, India is overpopulated. One of India's biggest problems is that there are simply too many Indians. In its area there live approximately 400,000,000 persons, one-fifth of the whole world's population. India's teeming millions really teem. There are not many large cities. Calcutta has more than two million inhabitants, Bombay has a million and a half, Madras and Hyderabad less than a million. There are twenty-three cities in India with a population of more than 200,000. And for the rest, there is crowded on to the land in almost 800,000 villages an enormous mass of humanity.

The population is increasing and it is increasing rapidly. India adds about five million persons a year to her total population. That means that since the outbreak of the second World War there have been as many persons added to India's population as there are persons in the British Isles. The rate of population increase is approximately 15 per cent per dicennium, as opposed to about 8 per cent in the United States, and about

4 per cent in the United Kingdom. There is no reason to suppose that this population increase will slacken off at any time in the immediate future. If anything, it will be accelerated. The birth rate in India is relatively high, about forty-five per thousand, as opposed to eighteen in the United States and sixteen in the United Kingdom, and it will be some very considerable time before this birth rate drops appreciably because of a changed standard of living. There is no particular moral or religious taboo on contraception in India, but there is a very fixed adherence to the idea

---

INCREASE IN TOTAL POPULATION OF INDIA  
(Census of 1941)

CENSUS	POPULATION (to nearest million)	INCREASE (to nearest million)	PERCENTAGE INCREASE
1891	279 millions	29 millions	11.8
1901	284 "	4 "	1.2
1911	303 "	19 "	6.7
1921	306 "	3 "	0.9
1931	338 "	32 "	10.6
1941	389 "	51 "	15.0

RURAL AND URBAN POPULATIONS  
(Census of 1941)

Percentage of total population	Urban 12.8%	Rural 87.2%
-----------------------------------	-------------	-------------

---

that the function of the family is to provide a male heir. It is unlikely, therefore, that there will be artificial modification of the birth rate until there is a widely changed outlook in the whole of the society.

In the meantime one of the characteristics of the impact of the Western world on India has been to lower the death rate and so provide a higher survival rate. The expectation of life in India is still low by our standards. It is only about twenty-nine years, but even so, infant mortality has been substantially reduced and the three great levelers of population: war, epidemic disease and famine have been pushed into the background. Under British rule, India has had one hundred years of domestic peace, and the foreign wars in which India has fought have provided very little alteration in the population. Famine as a leveler of population ceased to exist with the creation of a network of railways so that food could be moved from surplus Provinces into deficit Provinces. The famine of 1943 and the famine of 1946 are terrifying in their human aspects, but they

have had little effect upon the population curve of the country as a whole. Approximately one and a half million persons died in the Bengal famine, but India's population as a whole in that year increased by about four million. The most important of the epidemic diseases from the standpoint of population leveling, such as cholera, bubonic plague and smallpox, have been brought under partial control, even if they have not been wiped out. But it is no longer an accepted thing that entire villages should disappear in the course of one epidemic. Cholera, in Bihar in 1946, was met with heroic efforts.

It is in this field that the most rapid advances can be expected in the immediate future. No government will stand by and look on idly while epidemic disease takes one-tenth of the population. The general improvement in sanitation, increasing pressure against child marriage, provision of better diets, and the increasing intercourse between rural and urban areas, can all be expected to be reflected in an increase in survival rate and the expectancy of life, before changed conditions of living make any substantial change in the birth rate. The result is that India's population can be expected to continue to increase for some considerable period of time.

India is, of course, predominantly an agricultural country. More than 85 per cent of the total population is rural. The land is the source of livelihood. Increasing population puts increasing pressure on the land. And the result has been that by this time the relation of land to population has been forced down far below what we regard as a normal subsistence level. India has about two-thirds of an acre of land in cultivation for each person. The American figure is 2.6 acres per person. An Indian family is expected to live very profitably on four acres. The standard in the United States is about forty. This pressure has been increased by the fact that the characteristic mode of inheritance is fragmentation. Primogeniture is not the rule and it has been the practice for centuries to divide up the land equally among the sons. The result is that land-holdings are in very tiny parcels, often not contiguous and only in a well-organized and closely-knit village economy could cultivation be undertaken at all. Even so, it is uneconomical and contributes to the low yields that are characteristic of Indian agriculture.

## BALANCE OF FOOD ECONOMY

The result of this pressure on the land is a very delicate balance in the total food economy of the country. India produces just about enough food to feed herself, at a relatively low level, if all conditions are favorable. When conditions cease to be favorable there is a food shortage. The total output of agriculture obviously is not directed merely to food supply. India has her major money crops—cotton, jute, tobacco. India is, therefore, dependent to a degree on imports to redress a food unbalance. It is this factor that made the loss of Burma's rice of deadly importance in India.

It is apparent that the general standard of living cannot be raised in India until some of the pressure is taken off the land. There must be larger cultivation per capita for the total population. There must be a smaller part of the population engaged in agriculture, and a larger part of the population engaged in goods and services. It is for this reason that economists, both in India and elsewhere, have looked hopefully to large-scale industrialization as a part of the answer to India's economic problem.

Some of that industrialization has already taken place. The cotton spinning and weaving industry is the largest from the standpoint of employment. Second in importance is steel. Both of these industries have grown enormously in the last twenty-five years and made India the seventh country in the world, industrially. Thus far, however, industrialization has not kept pace with population increase. While the industries themselves have grown enormously, and while the number of persons employed in industry has multiplied year by year, the percentage of the population engaged in industry, as opposed to those engaged in agriculture, has actually declined. India's nonindustrial population is, at the present time, some 87 per cent of the total.

## INDUSTRIAL PROSPECTS

There is room for far greater industrialization than has yet taken place. One very large field, just opening up, is the processing of food products. The most important operation in this field is the processing of sugar. It is only within the last generation that India has become self-sufficient in sugar production. Formerly, India exported raw materials to Java and

imported sugar that had been processed in Java. Javan cane (the famous P. O. J.) which was disease-resistant and gave a higher yield than any of the Indian varieties, was successfully introduced in India some years ago, and its introduction was followed by the building of sugar milling operations. India has now become entirely self-sufficient in the processing of sugar, and has enough volume and capacity that the country is now operating under international agreed limitation. There is the possibility of considerable expansion in this field, arising from an increase in domestic consumption, but that rise in domestic consumption is contingent, in turn, on nonagricultural purchasing power. Once sugar is off the land, and in process of extraction and refining, it is a money crop. India's production of sugar could be quadrupled and all of it consumed locally and the per capita consumption would still be only a fraction of that in the United States. India's 400,000,000 persons use about a million tons of sugar a year. Our 140,000,000 use more than six million tons.

There are other industrial operations associated with agriculture that should have a bright future in India. One of these is the badly needed production of inorganic fertilizer. India has large mineral deposits that can be used for fertilizers, but processes of extraction and distribution are still in their relative infancy.

India has a volume of important minerals. It is the world's major source of mica and graphites. It has, indeed, all the base metals. Thus far these mineral resources have not been exhaustively explored and there are undoubtedly great sources of wealth still to be exploited.

What obviously is required is a large scale diversification of industry, not merely the development of a few great key heavy industries. This will require time, ingenuity and capital.

India requires a large transport industry actually to make these other developments feasible. India has a good railway network but is deficient in its highway network and even more deficient in motor vehicles. There have been some assembly plants in India, but there has not been the domestic manufacture of the internal combustion engine. This is an obvious key to a variety of transportation needs that have to be fitted into a new industrial picture.

Part of the success of this industrialization will necessarily be dependent also on the finding of external markets, since the growth of indus-

tries will depend again on purchasing power. It is certainly not to be expected that the Indian peasant is going to pull himself up by his own boot straps.

Some of those markets will probably be found in southeast Asia, some of them in the Middle East and possibly the east coast of Africa. In the immediate future, however, those markets are not large. India has a raw material basis to become the industrial supply center of all East Asia, but the processes that will start pumping India's industrial products through the arteries of Far Eastern trade will necessarily be slow in formation.

Industrialization is one of the answers to India's population problem, but it is only a partial answer and it will be slow in making its impact felt.

#### INCREASING CULTIVATION

The next logical thing to be done is the actual increase in areas under cultivation. One way to change the ratio of population to land is to bring more land in. India's capacity in this respect has by no means been exhausted. There are still very large tracts of marginal land that can be reclaimed. Two things, however, will be necessary for such reclamation projects. The first is the very considerable extension of India's system of irrigation. India's 73,000 miles of irrigation canals, supplying 30,000,000 acres, already constitute the largest system in the world, and another 20,000,000 acres are irrigated from tanks and wells. But even that system must be enormously expanded if the agricultural potentialities are to be realized. The second factor in reclamation is the question of fertility. Some of the arid areas that would have to be brought in are not areas of naturally good soils. The soils would have to be built up. This comes back again to the problem of creating a large-scale artificial fertilizer industry that can produce its materials at a low enough cost that they can be used in very large quantity.

Now in addition to the actual reclamation of lands that are at present marginal or arid, there is the possibility of increasing enormously the crop yield in present areas under cultivation. India has more land, for example, planted to sugar than any other country in the world. But any Hawaiian planter would go bankrupt in one year on Indian yields. India is one of the world's greatest wheat producers. The actual acre per acre wheat yield



in a normal year in India would be regarded as a disastrous crop yield in western United States or Canada. India has vast cotton fields, but American cotton farmers would die on the number of bales that the Indian villager can expect from his land.

The problem of increasing yields has a variety of aspects. In the first place, many agricultural methods are still primitive. The work animal is the bullock, and his use is not economic or efficient. Power cultivation and the use of artificial fertilizer are, in most areas, completely beyond the economic reach of the individual farmer. In addition, he can be taught new methods of cultivation, but the methods that have been handed down from generation to generation enjoy a sanctity that makes them hard to change.

The use of selected seed is greatly restricted not merely by the adherence to old patterns of behavior, but also because the procurement of seed is usually involved in the matter of agricultural indebtedness. India's internal agricultural debt is variously estimated at anywhere from four to ten billion dollars. Most of the villagers are permanently in debt. In the case of the tenants the landlord is also the tax collector and the system of tenure is often only a very short step from outright serfdom. The actual procurement of seed, therefore, is too frequently a matter of adjustment between the debtor and his creditor, and the individual farmer is at the mercy of his landlord.

There have been many experiments in India that have attempted to improve the quality and quantity of production. There is an outstanding agricultural experiment station at Allahabad that has been operated for many years by an American. There have been thousands of co-operative agricultural stations set up in India, but a great many of them have fallen by the wayside. The pattern is a familiar one: in the first year or two things go very well, up to about five years there is a genuine improvement in the whole productive capacity of the community. Then gradually the effectiveness of the station begins to slack off. Persons become submerged in individual indebtedness outside of the credit co-operatives and eventually the station closes. The general character of Indian agriculture is improving. Some communities, notably the Sikhs in the Punjab, have done efficient and profitable work in farming. But the improvement as a whole is pitifully slow. There must necessarily be very vigorous attention given

to an increase in productivity as well as increase in land if the food imbalance is to be redressed.

#### INDIA'S CATTLE

It would seem on the face of it that the problem of fertilizer could be met successfully in India with natural and organic fertilizer, since India has one-third of all the cattle in the world. Actually, however, India's cattle situation is such that this enormous herd, at least 150,000,000, is possibly a liability instead of an asset. In the matter of fertilization the Indian on the plains, having access to little wood and no coal, uses his cattle dung for fuel instead of for fertilizer. The loss to agricultural economy is obvious. In many parts of India dung is also used for plaster in the Indian's huts; and again, its use as a building material is uneconomic. In some parts of India it is also used for medicine. A large agricultural asset here is not being profitably employed because of acute need, as in the case of fuel, or because of habitual practices as in the other uses.

Cattle are also employed as work animals and this of course cuts down their value in other fields. This has a conspicuous effect, for example, on the milk yield. The average per capita milk yield of cattle in India is less than a quart a day! Moreover, it is customary practice, in India, to breed heifers on the first heat, and this also cuts down yields.

In addition to these factors, it should go almost without saying that the biggest element in the liability of the Indian herd is the sacredness of the cattle. The Hindu does not eat beef. Consequently, his cattle are supported by the fruit of his land and yield him in return services as work animals (and their service is not satisfactory), but do not provide him with meat. Moreover, the cattle are allowed to die of old age instead of being slaughtered at the proper time; furthermore, the improvement of herds by the killing of diseased cattle, by proper methods of castration and by selective breeding is simply taboo. It is possibly not an exaggeration to say that India's cattle cost India a great deal more than they are worth. One American agriculturist went so far as to say that India would be agriculturally enriched if two-thirds of her cattle could be taken away over night.

This cannot be done, of course, because of the fact that India's essential economy is tied up with India's essential psychology. Modes of be-

havior are dominated by rigid patterns of religion, superstition and taboo, and until there is complete freedom of individual action it is extremely difficult to modify those modes of behavior at any one given point.

The inability of the Hindu to use cattle for food is only one illustration of the way in which the behavior pattern of the individual is defined by the whole structure of the society in which he lives. The characteristic pattern of Hindu society is still the caste system, and while the caste system is an outgrowth of adaptation to need, the needs have changed, and the caste system in a modern society is an anachronism.

#### THE CASTE SYSTEM

It is essential to get the whole idea of caste into its proper focus. Caste was originally a division of function among individuals in the society. At the top were the teachers and priests, the Brahmin caste. Next in importance came the warriors, protectors of this first caste. They are called the Kshatriyas, but in modern parlance, they are very often associated with the warlike kingdoms of the northwest and called the Rajputs. Below the level of these came the Vaisyas, who are traders and merchants; and then at the lowest level came the Sudras, who are the farmers and laborers. Outside of the pale of stratification is the fifth group, the menials below the privileges of the caste system, commonly called the Untouchables. In official parlance they are called the Scheduled Castes, and often called the "depressed classes."

Within this framework there are many subdivisions based on occupation, place of habitation, or ancestry, so that all of India has become woven over with this network of organization into which each individual presumably fits. His caste position dictates certain modes of behavior. It provides, for example, with whom he may eat; it dictates his marriage (not necessarily within the limits of the given caste since some groups are exogamous and some are endogamous). It has provided over many centuries a framework for Hindu society. Caste has been the means by which religious law has been enforced and the observance of caste and its taboos have been the mark of the acceptance of religious faith as a whole. It is useless to deny that caste met a definite need when it came into existence and that it provided, over a long period of years, a relatively high degree of stability for the Indian social state as a whole.

At the same time it is extremely likely that caste has outlived most of its usefulness. The defects of the caste system are usually illustrated by the unfortunate position of the Untouchables who are subject to its limitations but deprived of its benefits. The Untouchable is in a doubly disadvantageous position. He accepts the caste system because he is a Hindu, but the caste system denies to him access to temples and denies to him the sharing of public wells. It imposes upon him a restriction to employment in trades or services that are regarded as below the level of those possible to caste Hindus. He is a menial who must undertake those tasks which too often give him real physical as well as spiritual pollution, and he does not share in deriving from the system its compensatory benefits.

One of the major difficulties of the caste system, however, is the fact that it does tend to freeze society into a given pattern. It makes change incredibly difficult. It sets up a completely artificial division between a social organization based on religious law and a political civilization based on civil law. There must, of necessity, be a permanent inner struggle in the life of every Hindu. Under those conditions the establishment of normal political and social processes that do not even admit the possibility of such a dichotomy is extremely difficult.

The caste system has another very grave drawback. It serves most conspicuously to accentuate the differences between the various communities. The Muslims do not accept caste; the Sikh community rebelled against it several hundred years ago; the Untouchables are outside of it; the Christians, of course, have resisted it; the Anglo-Indians have broken with it. As a result the acceptance of caste or the denial of it becomes the hallmark of a particular group within the society to which the individual feels that he belongs. Communal difference is not just a matter of difference in religious faith. It is a difference in the acceptance or rejection of a specialized mode of life. The caste system is one of those modes and thus it perpetuates unnecessarily the open identification of one group as opposed to other groups.

#### THE FUTURE OF CASTE

The caste system is gradually going out. Many elements in modern society necessarily have to cut right across caste barriers. The railways, for example, do not recognize a caste system. An individual can buy a first-

class ticket or a second-class ticket, or a third-class ticket, or a fourth-class ticket, but he cannot buy a Brahmin ticket or an Untouchable ticket. Industrialization serves also to break into the caste system. Men of different castes and different levels in the caste system may be obliged to work on the same assembly line. The idea of Untouchability or pollution is simply unthinkable in a large, compactly organized, industrialized operation. The Indian Army has also been a very important factor in breaking down some aspects of the caste system, especially in recent years. Segregation has been frowned on. It has been possible to organize many units in which members of different castes were included and in which also Muslim and Sikhs have been included. The limits on this leveling process have been merely those of good practice, where efficiency could be promoted by segregation, segregation has been allowed. But segregation is no longer accepted as a principle in army organization as a whole.

Obviously, the one thing that will do most to break down the caste system is universal, free, public, secular, nondiscriminatory education. This is the real common denominator for the society, and the need for it forms one of the mainsprings for the desire to set up a really efficient program of education for India.

In addition to these inevitable factors that are operating against the caste system, there have been very strong individual efforts to break down its effectiveness. The most spectacular of these has been made by Gandhi himself. Gandhi has rejected the whole moral basis for the caste system. He has associated himself with Untouchables. He has crossed the barriers of caste repeatedly. He calls his magazine *Harijan*, which is his own euphemism for Untouchables, since it means "Child of God." Gandhi has insisted, however, upon his essential Hinduism and his devotion to the Hindu faith. He was by birth a caste Hindu, coming from the third large group. He is obviously not a Hindu in good standing now, because he has violated all of the rules pertaining to intercourse with the Untouchables. At the same time, he has observed a rigid vegetarianism and asceticism, and in many respects he is more Hindu than the Brahmin. He has persisted, however, in his insistence that the problem of the position of the Untouchables is a moral and religious problem. It must be solved, he insists, by a reformation in the hearts of caste Hindus. They must accept the Untouchables as their brothers, in no way inferior

to themselves. Gandhi has sought to show how this can be done by his personal example to his followers.

At the same time Gandhi has resisted violently any political organization of the Untouchables as a group, or any recognition of them as a separate body. He has opposed any reservation of special seats for them in the legislatures, and any attempt to enforce their security through the operation or provisions of secular law. He holds that the identification of the group as a special community in Indian life perpetuates its disadvantages. It is because of this fact that although Gandhi has devoted a great deal of his enthusiasm and effort to improving the status of the Untouchables, he is not held in universal affection and esteem among the Untouchables themselves. It must have seemed curious, indeed, to many Americans to read that British-controlled police had to be called out in the suburb of Worli near Bombay to prevent a public demonstration against Gandhi by Untouchables when he proposed to make a demonstration on their behalf by spending a night in one of their huts that had been cleaned especially for his habitation.

A different point of view from Gandhi's has been taken by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who is the acknowledged political leader of the Untouchable group. Dr. Ambedkar had the good fortune, as a boy, to obtain the support of a powerful Indian Prince, the Gaekwar of Baroda, and his education in Great Britain and the United States was provided. He is a graduate of Cambridge University and has a degree also from Columbia. Dr. Ambedkar, born an Untouchable Hindu, has now embraced the Sikh faith and his political career has been devoted to the cause of the Untouchables. He has undertaken to organize them into an effective political party to compel attention to their needs and further to redress their grievances through political processes. He was eventually invited into the Viceroy's Executive Council, as Member for Labor, by Lord Linlithgow.

Naturally, Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar are political opponents. They are approaching the same problem from two entirely different directions.

The ultimate position of the Untouchables in Indian society is dependent upon the degree to which individual, civil, and personal rights can be brought under the complete control of secular government rather than under the control of a system of caste and religious law.

The Untouchables, however, are only the most dramatic aspect of the

caste system. The operation of the system as a whole perpetuates a mode of life that is based on an organization of society quite different from what we conceive of as normal, democratic processes. For good and bad the caste system is part of the political and social aspect of the Indian scene. It is not going to disappear this year or next. It has to be taken into account as part of the background for India's changing political structure.

#### RELIGION AND LAW

But, the question is often asked, if the persistence of superstition and taboo and of structures like the caste system is so obviously a retarding element in India, why has not British rule long since taken the necessary drastic steps to wipe them out?

British policy, indeed, has followed an opposite direction. That policy has been based, in part, on the attempt to preserve a tradition of respect for all religious institutions. Queen Victoria made this emphatic in her proclamation of 1858. She stated:

We declare it to be Our Royal Will and Pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted by reason of their religious faith or observances; but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under Us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of Our subjects on pain of Our highest displeasure.

It has been the historic habit of the British, in the name of religious toleration, to interfere as little as possible with customary law and practice when the latter had a religious origin. It is only when accepted practices so greatly outraged humanitarian instincts that they could not be ignored that some steps were taken. Three of those practices, relating directly to the position of women, have been directly combatted by the British and, in the last half century, by enlightened Indians. They are child marriage, female infanticide and widow suicide, or *suttee*. The last of the three was attacked by direct legislative decree under Lord Bentinck and the decree has been enforced in the face of what was at first stubborn opposition. Widow suicide probably still exists to some extent but it is no longer a required ritual. The self-immolation of the living widow on a husband's funeral pyre has disappeared.

Child marriage has been attacked by education and by local legisla-

tion. As early as the middle of the last century the British brought to bear as much influence as they could against the whole system of child marriage but left the initiation of legislation against it to Indians themselves. Today most of the Provinces and many of the States have relatively modern laws on the subject. The State of Indore, for example, has taken what may be regarded as a truly advanced position. Under its code the consummation of any marriage in which the bride is under fourteen years of age is punishable by not less than two years' imprisonment of the collusive parties. Likewise no marriage in which the bride is under sixteen may be contracted or consummated without the consent of both parents of the bride and the local magistrate.

Female infanticide has been hard to combat because its origin was economic as well as religious. The ritual exposure and abandonment of female children as part of a religious ceremony was attacked by direct legislation and the practice stopped. On the other hand it was exceedingly difficult to deal with secret infanticide whose origins were economic in the pressure of poverty. A common practice that was hard to stamp out, for example, was the killing of girl babies through the simple process of smearing the mother's breast with opium. The method that was followed was a combination of education and the prosecution of cases of infanticide as simple homicides under the penal code.

Enforcement of the normal penal code was also the mode employed to deal with another type of ritual killing, the practice of *Thuggee*. The Thugs, who were really organized highwaymen, were banded together loosely in the worship of the Goddess Kali, and dedicated to her their strangulation of unsuspecting travelers. The British met no opposition from the Indians on religious grounds when they prosecuted a vigorous campaign against the Thugs and wiped out the organization.

The British have often been criticized because of their *laissez faire* policy in respect to customary law. They have justified themselves on the ground of religious noninterference. The result has been slower social progress on the one hand, but a tradition of religious and personal tolerance on the other.

The entire picture is changing rapidly for the better at the present time. Two important factors are at work. Indian-dominated legislatures and local governments have not hesitated to grapple with problems raised by



customary law even when religious lines were crossed and the Indians have been able to do with clear conscience what the British felt they could not. In the second place, the opening of schools, the gradual breakdown of *Purdah* and the beginnings of political opportunity have brought Indian women into a new era. Their impact has been felt profoundly in social legislation and they have shown both competence and sensitivity.

The actual modification of these structures of superstition, taboo and religious law will depend, in the last analysis, upon how successfully India can set up a system of public education. The approach to India's problems, therefore, must come to grips with one of the largest and most difficult; that is, the question of language and literacy.

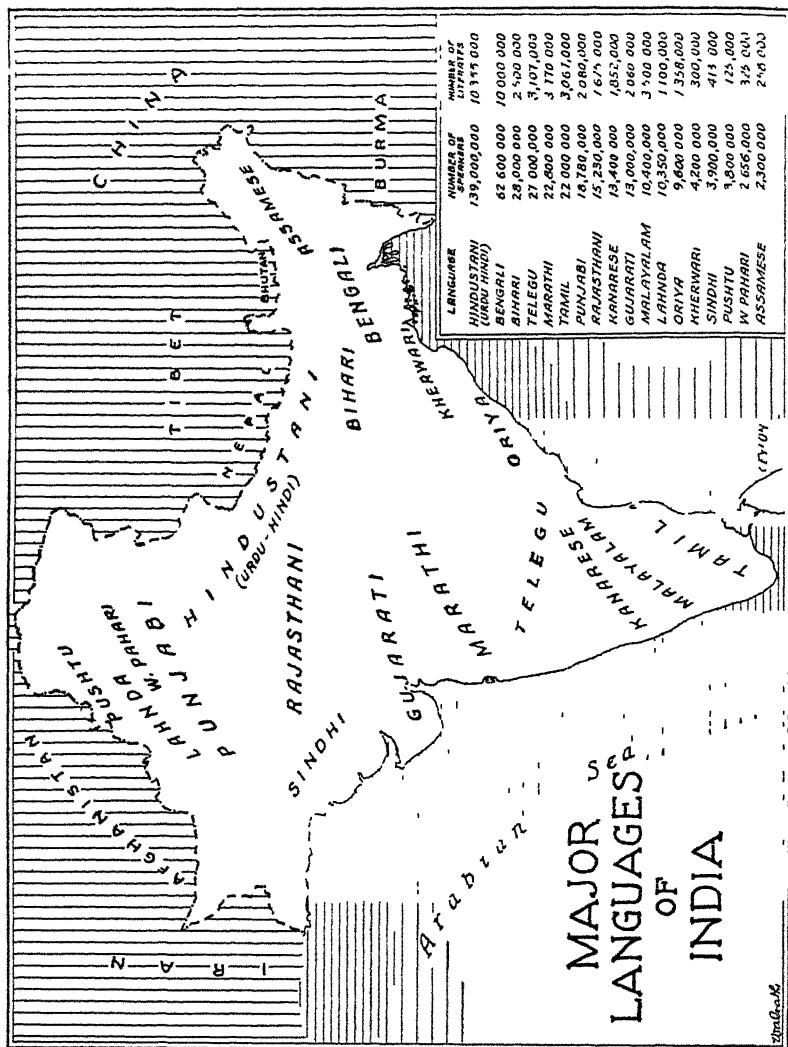
#### LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Any quick development of a compact Indian union has, furthermore, been retarded by the enormous diversity of languages and the relatively low degree of literacy. While it is a grave mistake to assume that this language division is an insuperable obstacle, nevertheless it is one of the problems that must be faced in the creation of a modern Indian state.

There are altogether in India more than two hundred languages and dialects. Fourteen of these may properly be called major languages since they are the means of communication for very substantial population groups. Many Indians are admirably polylingual, especially when language variations and dialect variations are relatively small within a limited area or when root stocks are closely associated. On the other hand, between some major languages, and indeed whole major language groups, there is complete mutual unintelligibility.

India's major languages are divided by virtue of history and geography into two classifications. The older of the two groups, the so-called "pre-Aryan," is composed of the body of Dravidian languages that are spoken largely in the southern part of the peninsula. Invaders from the northwest brought in a second language family, the Indo-European, or Indo-Iranian group, and this takes in the whole of northern and western India, with the Ganges Valley, and extends southward somewhat below Bombay. The Indo-Iranian group is somewhat larger in its number of speakers than the Dravidian.

These two language groups are totally different in origin. They are,



moreover, completely separated in orthography since the Dravidian languages have preserved their pre-Aryan types of script. The Indo-Iranian languages, on the other hand, are divided among themselves into two different script types. One body uses scripts of Sanskritic origin, reading from left to right, and the other group uses characters of Arabic origin, reading from right to left.

This script division is of particular importance because it applies to the largest single language in India, that is, Hindustani. Actually, Hindustani is not one language, but two. It is spoken by approximately 140 million persons, but within that number there is complete division into two written languages called Hindi and Urdu. Hindi is written in Sanskrit character and Urdu is written in Arabic.

There is not a great deal of difference between these two derivatives when the language is spoken. Persons who use Hindi can, with a little effort, make themselves understood in an Urdu-speaking community, and vice versa. The two written languages, however, have no similarity and are mutually unintelligible.

This Hindi-Urdu combination, however, affords the nearest thing to a *lingua franca* for India. More than ten million persons are literate in one branch or the other of the language, and it can be used as general means of communication throughout the whole of the Ganges Valley, with the exception of the Province of Bengal.

Bengal also uses an Indo-European language, called Bengali. It is a distinct language and not an offshoot of Hindi. It is used by something more than sixty million persons, including the whole of the Province of Bengal, about half of the Province of Assam and a small part of the Province of Bihar. Bengali is important to India out of proportion to its size. In spite of the fact that it is the spoken language of only half as many persons as those who use the Hindi-Urdu group, it has more than ten million literates. Consequently, as a written language, it is as important as Hindi and Urdu combined. One reason for this is the fact that a very important part of the modern Indian "revival of learning" took place in Bengal Province and some of the finest modern Indian literature has been written in Bengali. It was the language, for example, of Sir Rabindranath Tagore, and his influence upon both language and literature should not be underestimated.

The next language in point of size in the Indo-European group is Bihari, the language of the Province of Bihar. It has approximately thirty million speakers, but not more than 10 per cent of literacy. As a means of communication, therefore, it gives way to the preponderant Bengali on the east and the Hindi-Urdu of the United Provinces on the west.

Another Indo-European language of importance is a language of western India. This is Marathi, with something over twenty million speakers and about four million literates. Marathi is one of the languages of Bombay Province, of the Central Provinces and of part of the Princely State of Hyderabad. This is one of the more developed and literate areas in India, and consequently the language becomes important. It should be considered, however, in connection with another western Indian language with which it often dovetails. This is Gujarati, spoken by about one-fifth of the population of Bombay and used almost exclusively in the State of Baroda (one of the most literate of the States), the West India States Agency and the Gujarat States. Marathi and Gujarati, although not mutually intelligible, have overlapped to such a degree geographically that they constitute something of a language group.

Associated with Hindi-Urdu, and also following within the Indo-Iranian languages, is the language of the Punjab. This is called Punjabi and is spoken by approximately twenty million persons. Literacy within the language is a little bit better than 10 per cent.

South of the Punjab area are the Rajputana States and they have their own separate language, Rajastani. It is used by something more than fifteen million persons. Literacy in this area is not as high as in some others. Not more than one person in twenty who uses Rajastani can read and write.

Another one of the Indo-European languages spoken by a border group is Oriya, the language of the Province of Orissa. It has just about ten million users and about 10 per cent literacy.

The same thing is true of Lantha which is spoken in the Northwest Frontier Province and in western Punjab. It is used by more than ten million persons and less than 10 per cent of them are literate in the language.

## THE DRAVIDIAN GROUP

The languages that we have been discussing so far are those of northern and western India. Now we come to the large Dravidian groups. Most important of these is Telegu. It is spoken by about one-third of Madras Province, half of the State of Hyderabad, part of Mysore and some adjacent areas. It has altogether about twenty-seven million speakers and something more than three million literates. Associated with it in the areas of use is another large Dravidian language, Tamil, with about twenty-two million speakers and about 15 per cent literates. Tamil has also been widely used in areas of migration from southern India. There are, for example, Tamil-speaking areas in Ceylon, in south Burma, in Malaya and in the Fiji Islands. These two languages, Tamil and Telegu, together provide the means of communication for more than fifty million persons.

Somewhat to the north of the area in which these languages are spoken, but still in the southern plateau area of India, there is another large Dravidian speech, Kanarese. It is spoken by more than thirteen million persons, of whom something less than two million are literate. South of the Kanarese group, and extending to the tip of the peninsula, is a language called Malayalam, with approximately ten million users. Because of the fact that this is one of the chief languages of the States of Travancore and Cochin, where there is the highest percentage of literacy in India, the number of literates in Malayalam is higher proportionately than in any other Indian language. It is approximately 35 per cent.

On the face of it this seems like a formidable language pattern and a terrifying diversity. Actually, however, it is a less serious obstacle to progress than might at first be imagined. The saving factor here is the enormous size of each one of these languages. Each of these communities, for example, is larger than the Swedish-speaking community or Dutch-speaking community in Europe. There are more people in the world, for example, who speak a language like Kanarese than there are who speak Greek. There is, therefore, a means of communication and a means of being intelligible in a very large community in each case. The vast majority of the population has no occasion to leave its community and the

Tamil-speaking villager in Madras has no more reason to know anything about Bengali than a Spanish peasant has to learn Polish.

#### NEED FOR A LINGUA FRANCA

The problem of intercommunication between these areas is the problem of developing a *lingua franca* along the higher levels. The largest such possible *lingua franca* is the Hindi-Urdu group that provides a working means of communication for more than a quarter of the population. It is not easy to extend this language group to southern India, however, because of its complete difference in origin.

This is the point at which English has assumed an importance in India out of all proportion to its actual size. Throughout all of India there are approximately twenty-five million persons who have some knowledge of English. That means that approximately 6 to 7 per cent of the whole Indian population can understand some English words. Of this number, approximately one-third (about eight million) are genuinely literate. Now this one-third, in turn, is concentrated chiefly in the more important urban areas and along the line of communication. It is, as a result, quite possible to travel freely in India and to transact business with English as the language of primary use.

English is, in addition, the language of government. It is the language of higher education. It is the language of the upper courts. It is very largely the language of scientific research. It has had, therefore, an immense impact on the intellectual life of the Indian community.

The pattern of language in relation to education was established in the United Kingdom in the first quarter of the last century. There was a long and distinguished debate on the fashion in which an Indian educational system should be established, and a contest between the so-called Occidentalist and Orientalist schools of thought. Under the leadership of Lord Macauley the former group was eventually successful. It was determined that English should be the language of secondary and higher education. It was determined to leave primary education in the languages of the various communities. This decision has had the advantage of making a major volume of materials accessible to the secondary and advanced student, but it also has had the effect of retarding literacy as a whole. It also retarded the actual progress in the Indian school system of individual

Indians since they were obliged to become bilingual from the outset. There is a generally accepted understanding of this difficulty in India, and the Indians look with complete sympathy on the case of the individual whose advanced education has been compromised by language difficulties. It is quite common practice among Indians to designate their

---

PROGRESS OF LITERACY				
	PERCENTAGE OF LIT- ERACY — 1941		BOTH SEXES	PERCENTAGE OF LIT- ERACY — 1931 BOTH SEXES
	MALES	FEMALES		
ALL INDIA	19	5	12.2	6.9
PROVINCES, ETC. OF				
BRITISH INDIA	18.6	6.4	12.7	7.1
Bombay	30.0	4.0	19.5	9.9
Bengal	25.0	7.0	16.1	9.4
Madras	20.4	5.6	13.0	9.8
Punjab	18.8	7.0	12.9	5.3
Central Provinces	18.8	4.6	11.7	4.0
Assam	19.3	3.7	11.5	7.7
Orissa	19.4	2.4	10.9	—
Sind	16.4	4.4	10.4	5.9
Bihar	17.2	2.2	9.7	—
United Provinces	14.4	2.4	8.4	4.7
N. W. Frontier Province	—	—	7.7	4.1
Delhi	35.8	15.6	14.1	14.1
INDIAN STATES				
Travancore	58.6	36.8	47.7	23.3
Cochin	44.4	26.4	35.4	28.1
Baroda	33.5	12.5	23.0	17.8
Mysore	19.6	4.8	12.2	9.1
Gwalior	—	—	7.4	4.0
Hyderabad	11.5	2.1	6.8	4.1
Kashmir	11.0	2.2	6.6	3.4
Punjab States	10.3	1.9	6.1	3.6

---

educational qualifications (even on their calling cards) with the phrase, "Failed Matric" or "Failed B.A." That means merely that a person has gone through an educational system in a foreign language up to a given point, but was not able to pass the examination at one stage or another.

The attack on illiteracy as a whole is a necessary part of any planning for political and social growth in India. At the present time in all of India there are approximately twelve persons out of every hundred who can

read and write in some way. The percentage among men is nineteen; among women, about five. These percentages, however, do not reflect a uniform pattern for all of India. In the urban areas, Bombay and Calcutta, for example, 50 per cent of the population is literate. In some provincial areas the percentage of literacy is less than ten and in some areas the percentage of literacy among women is less than one. There is no uniform variation, moreover, between the Provinces and the States. Literacy is slightly higher in British India than it is in the States. But this reflects a very low percentage in some of the backward States because of the high proportion of literacy that we have already noted in the States of Travancore and Cochin and in Baroda. It is significant in this connection that in these States there is a disproportionately large number of Christians and English speaking persons.

The actual place of literacy or illiteracy within a society is capable of much misunderstanding. It must be remembered, in this connection, that 85 per cent of all of India's people are villagers for whom a knowledge of reading and writing is of relatively little importance in any case. Literacy as a cultural factor may be greatly over-estimated in a Western country with its extreme concentration on the printed word. It has been truly said that there is no demonstrable connection between literacy and intelligence, and that holds true for India.

#### LITERACY AND DEMOCRACY

On the other hand, the political aspect of the problem of illiteracy makes it a grave one. It is presumed that the desirable form of government for the India of the future is some type of democracy. Now democracy presupposes the expression of group opinion and of group will on matters of idea and personality. In a democracy there are differences of opinion on questions of policy and a majority within the society expresses its judgment on those differences. It does this, in some instances, by passing directly upon the issues themselves in the form of referenda and plebiscites, and in other cases, by passing upon the selection or rejection of individuals who are known to espouse certain principles.

It is manifestly very much easier to obtain a judgment on a given issue from the whole body of a citizenry if the individuals in that citizenry can read and write. It is very much easier to hold an election if the names of



candidates can be printed and can be read by persons who are to vote for them. It should be stressed, however, that this is a functional and not a cultural aspect of literacy. It relates directly to the business of governing in the form that we believe to be desirable.

There are practical ways in which some of these difficulties can be overcome. The first and most obvious one is the use of a graduated suffrage. Within the limits of the village, it is not necessary for the individual to be able to read and write in order to judge the qualifications of candidates for the local headman or the local council. Then, as the areas of representation are enlarged, graduated qualifications for the suffrage can be introduced, including that of literacy. The ideal in a democracy is universal adult suffrage on all issues, both local and national. It is doubtful, however, that such an ideal can be attained until there is some uniformly intelligible means of communicating ideas. Until that ideal is reached, it is possible to use the practices of democratic selection and of representation at different levels.

This is precisely what has been worked out in practice already through the instrument of qualifications for the suffrage. The principle, however, can be extended even more widely, and even at this stage machinery can be established so that every adult votes for something or someone at some stage on the political ladder.

Another means of tackling the problem politically is through the wider use of the spoken word. The largest single instrument for that purpose is radio broadcasting. There are nine broadcasting stations in India, operated both individually and as a network. They can reach every part of the country. It has therefore been a part of the Government's program for enlarging the political field to distribute receiving sets to villages throughout India and to bring to literally millions of persons, by means of the spoken word, ideas and issues that they could not obtain from the printed page. Such a program can be extended almost indefinitely. It will face the objection, however, that the ideas and issues so presented to the public will necessarily be modified by the political beliefs and the political interests of those who control the broadcasting units. Up to the present time this control has been the Government of India. It will not be suggested, I believe, that the presentation of an organized group of political ideas by a government in power can afford a permanently satisfac-

tory substitute for the free interplay of ideas and opinions originating from individuals and groups within or without the structures of government itself.

Word of mouth and visual education have also been widely used in the form of traveling vans that have moved from village to village with pictorial displays, motion pictures, speakers and interpreters, whose function it was to bring to more remote areas some knowledge of what was happening in other parts of the country and of the world. This mode of approach is also subject to the same criticism that can be leveled against a broadcasting program. It is a controlled rather than a free mode of political education.

From the political point of view, therefore, it seems unlikely that rapid advance can be made in the practice of democracy until a direct attack is made on illiteracy as a whole. The scope of the success of that attack may determine, in the long run, the ability of the Indians to set up a genuinely democratic government that accords in some measure with our own ideas and our own ideals for India.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH

If literacy is an important tool to be used in the fashioning of democracy, it is equally important in India because of its close relation to another one of India's sociological problems, that is, the problem of public health. It is very much easier to carry out a large-scale program for the improvement of the health of an Indian community if at least a considerable part of the people involved can read the information on a poster or the label on a bottle. And public health is one of India's greatest problems.

The normal expectancy of life in India, as has already been said, is about twenty-nine years. Infant mortality in the chartered areas runs regularly between 150 and 200 per thousand living births. Most of the important tropical diseases are endemic in India. Some of them are regularly epidemic. The larger causes of death from disease are diseases of the digestive tract, including Asiatic cholera, respiratory diseases, with a high incidence of tuberculosis, and parasitic disease, including malaria. To most of these some degree of resistance has been built up over the centuries and so, curiously enough, the most serious single epidemic in In-

dia's modern history was the epidemic of influenza in 1918. More than ten million persons are believed to have died, either directly or indirectly, as a result of this epidemic.

But right at the bottom of the whole problem of public health in India is the basic problem of poverty. Most of the diseases of the digestive tract are filth diseases; so as a rule, is smallpox, also a scourge in India. Parasitic diseases, such as bubonic plague, for example, reflect, as a rule, either a low standard of living or indifference to sources of infection. An excellent case can be made to demonstrate that the incidence of tuberculosis itself, in a community as a whole, is an index of deficient diet. Leprosy is a filth and standard-of-living disease, primarily.

Now when we get beyond this oversimplification that says, in effect, that poor people have a habit of getting sick and well-to-do people don't, we come to the fact that the control of most of the larger killers has to be carried out by widespread community effort.

The first thing that is required is a complete overhaul of the country's entire system of sanitation. Indians, individually, are extraordinarily clean. Collectively, from the medical point of view, they are intolerably dirty. What is required to change that is a drastic renovation of all of the accepted means of sewage disposal and a completely changed outlook on the part of entire communities toward the subject of collective cleanliness. This is not possible unless there is an enormous nationwide program of public education in the *ABC's* of preventive medicine. Such a program would naturally use literacy as its first convenient weapon.

We found that out in the Philippines when we discovered that the most effective centers for changing the health habits of a community were the local schools.

It should be noted, of course, that the adoption of a large-scale program of scientific, controlled public health would necessarily run into the whole volume of superstition and taboo that controls so much of Indian life. The modern medical man in India is confronted not only with appalling ignorance of some of the simplest rules of hygiene; he faces also restrictions of the caste system and practices such as the seclusion of women. It has been difficult, up to the present time, to recruit the necessary cadres of nurses and impossible in many cases for medical attendants to cross the barriers of caste or the barriers of seclusion of women.

There is, in addition, an entire body of "ancient medical practice" that has the sanction of religious law. Frequently the practice of modern medicine has come into direct collision with this body of medical thought. While it is extremely likely that in this body of medical practice there are many things that have been worked out empirically, and that have great value, the resistance of each group to the other has thus far made any synthesis impossible.

Few questions are asked more frequently than the one, "Why has not Britain, in 150 years of occupation, done something about cleaning up the frightful situation in respect to public health?" The answer is that a great deal has been done. There are several thousand hospitals and medical centers in India. There are more than 250,000 reasonably qualified medical practitioners. There are approximately 80,000 nurses. But they are coping with a problem so gigantic in its scope they have not been able to make spectacular headway. To do a really successful cleaning-up job in India would require in the beginning putting about 300,000,000 persons in quarantine. The Government of India has never had the funds or disposition to undertake any such program.

At the present time one of the most serious and difficult medical problems in India, for example, is the high incidence of malaria. It can be treated by the distribution of anti-malarial specifics, and that, in itself, would mean the distribution of approximately one hundred million grains of quinine or its equivalent daily. In addition to that, it would be necessary to institute nationwide mosquito control, and at the very minimum this would require a field force of a quarter of a million persons. It could be done, but it can't be done at the present level of India's resources and available manpower for the job.

Smallpox can be disposed of with a nationwide program of continued vaccination. But that means the vaccinating of a quarter of a billion persons. And a very considerable part of the number can be expected to be extremely resistant to the idea of vaccination until its merits have been proved.

Those are typical of the problems that have to be faced in the field of public health. They are not small-scale operations—they are gigantic. Once they are surveyed, the question becomes not "Why hasn't some-

thing been done?", but "How, indeed, has it been possible, under the circumstances, to accomplish so much?"

It is precisely because of the gigantic scope of the problem that individual Indians throughout the country must be enlisted in a general program of changing the whole concept of public health. This can be done only if there is some reasonable means of reaching the public as a whole. This comes back, in turn, to the dissemination of information and thus to the problem of illiteracy.

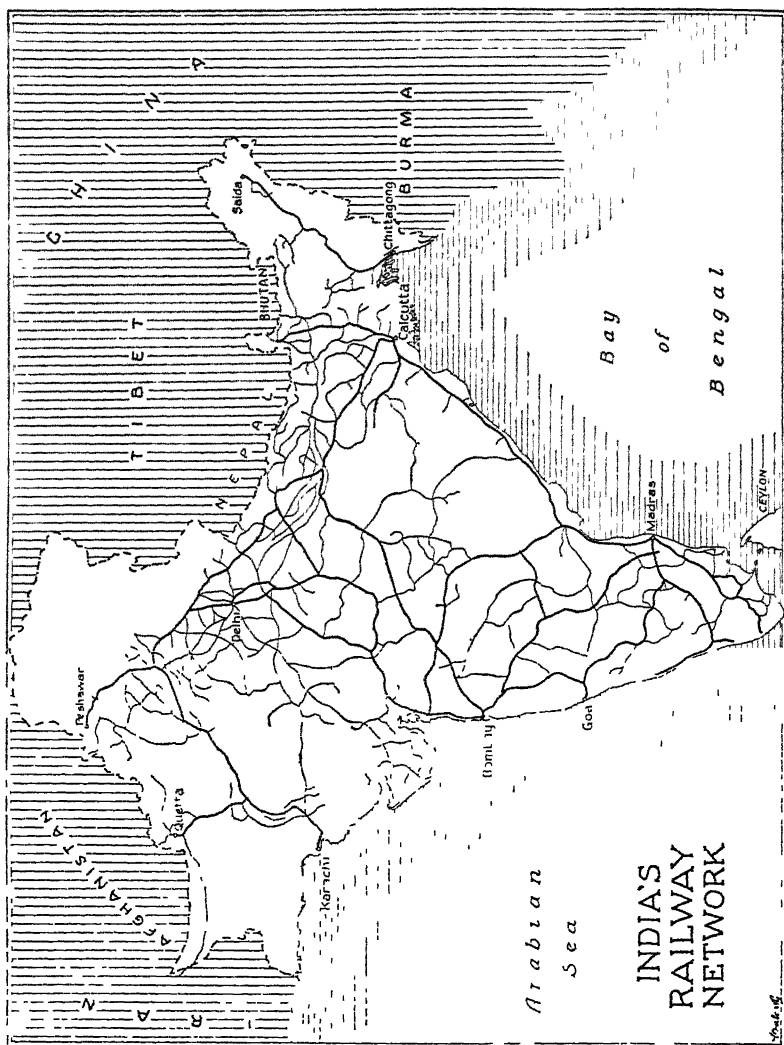
What all this adds up to is that a new government is being projected for a country of 400,000,000 persons in which there is abject poverty, large illiteracy, a high death rate, a lack of the easy means to change the minds of the whole society and a basic conflict between religious and civil law that is reflected in the survival of a vast system of superstition and taboos.

#### PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that those who are projecting this new government are insensitive to the gravity of these problems. Actually, in the course of the last twenty years, there has been a continued concentration on planning for India's future. There is a Government Department of Planning, and it has projected many proposals to deal with various phases of these sociological problems.

The first field in which plans have been laid extensively is the attack on poverty. The first thing that is necessary at this point is the modification of agricultural methods and large-scale agricultural development throughout the whole of the country. The proposals that have been made thus far contemplate an initiative taken by the Government.

It has been proposed that the Central Government appropriate and spend, within the next fifteen years, approximately three billion dollars in a concerted drive to double India's agricultural production. This program has two general objectives. The first is to bring more land into cultivation, and the second is greatly to increase the yields of already existing agricultural areas. Bringing more land into production involves a gigantic increase in India's area under irrigation. Some of this can be done by increasing the mileage of the already existing irrigation canals. Some



of it has to be done by the building of reservoir tanks and the driving of deep wells. The Department of Agriculture estimates very conservatively that India's arable land can be increased by one-seventh within a reasonably short space of time if money can be spent on irrigation projects.

The second phase of this agricultural program, that is, increasing agricultural output, is largely a matter of changing some methods of cultivation. The most important single thing here is the need for an immense increase in the use of fertilizers, both natural and artificial. An increase in the use of natural fertilizers with India's immense cattle herd has two phases. First, the Indians must be taught to make better use of their manures. This means an end to the practice of using dung for plaster and medicine. The other phase is a creation of better fuel sources so that it will not be necessary to use dung for fuel. Many of the village areas, particularly in the plains, are badly depleted of forests and consequently it is essential to build up forest areas and to develop coal resources so that more economic fuels will be available. The Government of India hopes, within fifteen years, to increase the whole forest area in India by about 25 per cent through replanting projects. It is necessary to put under forest an additional 100,000 square miles in India.

The development of new forest reserves and of coal reserves for fuel necessitates also a very considerable increase in the means of transportation and communication if those resources are to be made available to the villages that need them. There must be, consequently, an expansion of India's railway network and a very large scale road-building program. India has more than 40,000 miles of railway, but these do not reach a tenth of the Indian villages. India has something less than 300,000 miles of highways, but there are 800,000 Indian villages. There are almost three villages for every mile of road. The Government, consequently, has put forward a program that involves the building of 400,000 additional miles of main highways. These are to be linked and connected, in turn, by provincial feeder roads. The Central Government would sustain the capital cost of the main highways and the individual Provinces and communities would be responsible for the subsidiary means of communication. The cost of this program is estimated at something under two billion dollars.

An ambitious railway development plan has also been laid out. This plan calls for an expenditure of approximately a billion dollars over the course of seven years. The first phase of this plan has already gone into effect with the expenditure of \$123,000,000 for the year 1946.

An important item in the main-line program for 1946 to 1947 is the provision of staff quarters and staff welfare works. A sum of \$6,300,000 was set apart for this purpose, the provision for staff quarters alone being \$3,920,000. A housing committee set up by the Railway Board toured the various Provinces and made its recommendations.

The renewal of track including rails, cross-ties and ballast absorbed about a quarter of the total budget for the year. Realignments and remodeling of yards and stations and increasing line capacity by doubling of track in certain sections was expected to absorb \$7,500,000, while about \$3,000,000 was earmarked for raising the existing standard of signaling and in general improvement in railway communications. Additional tele-communications and wireless circuits are to be provided.

The largest single item of expenditure for 1946 was purchase of rolling stock, for which about \$33,000,000 was set aside. This was for locomotives, coaches and freight cars.

Amenities to the public, for which a considerable sum was also earmarked, included raising and lengthening of platforms, provision of foot overbridges and covers over the platforms, new and improved waiting rooms, better water supply and improvements to station buildings, warehouses and approaches.

Provision was also made for the restoration of lines, dismantled during the war, for new construction and for engineering and traffic surveys for new lines.

Now in addition to bringing better fuels to the villages, it is planned to increase output by the large-scale introduction of artificial fertilizers. India has, fortunately, very considerable mineral deposits that can be used in this field. They have not as yet been widely developed. The present plans include the erection of a factory to produce sulphate of ammonia in the Province of Bihar. This factory is expected to have an annual capacity of about 350,000 tons. There are also large natural deposits in Central India, and it is planned to utilize these to bring production up to perhaps a half million tons annually within a short period of time. This,



however, does not reach the long-range needs which are estimated at not less than 300,000,000 tons a year.

American capital and skill have been enlisted to join with the British in this enterprise.

#### USE OF CO-OPERATIVES

Better means of cultivation involve two things. There is, first, the need for an understanding, on the part of the cultivator himself, of the desirability of changed methods. The most effective means taken so far to increase this knowledge has been the operation of co-operative agriculture stations. Approximately 80,000 of these have been put into operation over the last twenty years and in some areas they have been reasonably successful. The second way in which this problem must be attacked is the provision of credit so that the cultivator can actually afford to use better methods. He needs farming machinery and he needs selected seed. These will not be available unless he has funds at his disposal for purchasing them. Co-operative rural credit is the only hope in sight to meet this problem.

A reconstitution of village life throughout India, geared to a higher standard of living, means also the necessity for a very much larger volume of cheap power. At the present time manpower and bullock power are used characteristically because they are cheaper than gasoline or electricity. In how far India's petroleum resources can be developed so as to place on the market a large supply of petroleum fuel at low cost cannot yet be determined. Thus far the resources of Burma and the Middle East have not yet been reflected in any rise in the standard of living through the use of petroleum fuels among the poor classes of India. There is no Ford on the farm in rural India.

In the immediate future there is more possibility of electrical development than of a very rapid spread of internal combustion engines, since it can be done collectively. India has good sources for hydroelectric power. In the north of India there are snow-fed streams whose flow is constant. Thus far, however, the development of these power resources has been meager. The United States, for example, generates in any given week more electric current than is used in the whole of India in a year. And even that picture of India, with a fiftieth of the American current re-

sources, is inadequate, because of the fact that a very large part of India's electricity is absorbed in the larger cities. Bombay and Calcutta alone take 42 per cent of the total electric output of India.

This is a field in which there is opportunity for very large expansion but like the other fields that we have mentioned, this expansion is dependent upon capital outlay. Some of that capital is available in India and some of it must be brought in from abroad.

#### INDUSTRIALIZATION

The introduction of large-scale power development brings up once more the question of what can be done in the way of providing a very considerable industrialization in India. This also has been the subject of much study and of ambitious planning. The largest of these plans is the so-called Bombay Plan for India's industrial development. This plan contemplates the designation of certain special industries as essential to the national interest. If private capital is not forthcoming to develop such industries, the government will step in, provide the necessary capital and insure, through planned purchases, a market for part of the output.

The Bombay Plan is only one of several means of approach to the whole question of industrialization. With or without it, India will be obliged to move forward in the transformation of her raw materials into consumer goods. The Indian steel industry, for example, is prepared now to go ahead with a general program of manufacture of locomotives and of all of the essential parts for Indian shipbuilding. There is available material and the opportunity for developing an aviation industry in India. Some of the groundwork for this was laid during the war, and there is a large chain of landing fields and the beginning of a system of communication that can be used to make India vigorous and important in the commercial air transport field.

In the whole field of industrialization, India has not gone fast enough to outpace population increase, and it has not as yet been geared to any assured market. The proponents of rapid industrialization believe that India can and will become the natural supplier of fabricated goods for the whole of southeast Asia. Thus far, however, the political situation in various Asiatic countries has been so disturbed that it has been impossible to

bring raw material production back to sufficient levels that a purchasing power potential could be even estimated.

In the long run the natural market for processed goods in India is the domestic market. There are, after all, four hundred million Indians, and the standard of living is presumably to be changed by modifications of the country's economy as a whole. More and more different items will presumably be taken out of the luxury class and go into the necessity class as the life of the Indian villager changes. In the meantime, however, normal purchasing power does not exist in those villages. Their productive capacity extends only to the supply of the barest living minimum. Obviously, if India's domestic market is to provide the backbone for large industrialization, there must be much larger credit operations than any that have been conceived of at the present time.

What is planned, in effect, is a modification of the whole character of Indian life at the village level as well as in the cities. This comes back once more to problems like those of public education, public health and the changing of long-standing attitudes and outlook. One of the keys to this is obviously the institution of a completely different educational pattern.

#### A PLAN FOR EDUCATION

It is for this reason that much interest has been attached to the program, announced early in 1945, for the provision of a nation-wide system of free, uniform, compulsory, public education for all of India. This is the plan worked out and submitted by John Sargent, Advisor on Education to the Government of India.

It represents some very important departures from previous educational policy. In the first place, it comes to grips at once with the problem of primary education. It provides that there shall be free, compulsory, public, secular education for all children in British India from the ages of six to fourteen. That education is to be conducted in the vernacular languages. The actual choice of the languages to be used will depend in part upon the teacher talent and textbook material available. At one point in the planning, it was fixed arbitrarily at twenty-two, but this will undoubtedly be modified in practice.

The program calls for a cadre of 800,000 teachers in the beginning.

This would gradually be increased until, at the end of forty years, there would be in India 1,800,000 teachers responsible for the instruction annually of fifty-two million pupils. Of this group, it is estimated that one in five would go on for high school instruction after fourteen years, and that eventually about 250,000 would attend university. Eventually, it would be necessary to set up a large number of training schools and colleges to provide approximately two million non-graduate teachers for teaching primary levels.

The cost of this program will presumably be considerably less than it would be if it were established in the Western world. At the levels indicated it contemplates an expenditure of a billion dollars a year after the plan is in operation. Indians have suggested that the willingness of Indian teachers to accept relatively low compensation levels would make it possible to carry out such a program even within the limits of India's national income, as it is foreseen at the present time.

There are, however, many large problems that have to be faced in putting a plan of this sort into operation. Some degree of uniformity in teachers' requirements and instruction standards is desirable. This, however, must be accomplished in spite of the diversity of the languages employed. Textbooks, for example, will have to be printed in not less than a dozen languages, and probably in twice that number. Teacher training will have to take place in different geographical and language areas, and a system of supervision will be required to co-ordinate the diverse elements that are a necessary part of such a program.

There has been much criticism of British policy in the past because not enough was done in the field of education. Since the Sargent plan was promulgated, that criticism has been shifted to the opposite extreme, with the insistence that what was planned was far too formidable. Both of those attitudes are open to question. The frequent statement that "nothing" has been done about education in India is far from the truth.

There are several hundred thousand primary and secondary schools in India. There are seventeen universities, several hundred colleges and seventy-odd technical schools on the higher level. The great Muslim University at Aligarh and the equally distinguished Hindu University at Benares are justly famous.

The progress that has been made, in recent years especially, is eloquent

testimony to the concern that those in authority have felt and to the eagerness with which all of India has responded to the attempts to improve educational conditions.

What has been done, however, has not yet been on a sufficiently large scale to grow quickly and easily into the final phases of the battle against illiteracy. The lack of compulsion, the lack of uniformity, and the lack of a system of fully supported secular public education have limited the effectiveness of the facilities that already exist.

Let us take the school year 1936 to 1937 as an example of how the pattern of education relates to the large problem, since that was prior to the disturbances of the war, but well after widespread facilities were available.

In that year there were, in India, approximately 60,000,000 children in the school-age group. Of these, just about one-fifth (the exact figure was 11,985,986) were in school. There, at the outset, would be the presumptive means for making roughly 20 per cent of the population literate. But of those roughly 12,000,000—5,188,601 were in the first grade. The casualty between first and second grade was heavy; 2,355,418 were in the second grade. By the third grade this dropped to 1,722,292. In the fourth grade there were 1,214,504 and in the fifth only 703,628.

Working literacy cannot be assured with less than five years of schooling, and thus the impact of the system on solving the problem has been drastically lessened. It was this factor, as well as other considerations, that led Mr. Sargent and his associates in framing a new plan to insist that India must have free and compulsory education, at least through the six to fourteen age group, and that it must be made nation-wide. In making his recommendations, Mr. Sargent said, in this connection:

Apart from the extremely slow progress which had been made before the war, the present system does not provide the foundations on which an effective structure could be erected; in fact, much of the present rambling edifice will have to be scrapped in order that something better may be substituted. A second possible misconception is that some half-way house of a less expensive type can be found between what now is and what this report advocates. The answer to this is that the minimum provision which could be accepted as constituting a national system postulates that all children must receive enough education to prepare them to earn a living as well as to fulfil themselves as individuals and discharge their duties as citizens. It also requires that those with the requisite capacity should be further trained to fill positions of responsibility

in all walks of life. It has been suggested by some of those who shrink from the financial implications of going the whole way, that education might be limited to all the children in some places only. Even if such a differentiation could be regarded as compatible with the claims of social justice, it is difficult to see how the selection involved could be fairly made: If there is to be anything like equality of opportunity, it is impossible to justify providing facilities for some of the nation's children and not for others. In the first place, therefore, a national system can hardly be other than universal. Secondly, it must also be compulsory, if the grave wastage which exists today under a voluntary system is not to be perpetuated and even aggravated. And thirdly, if education is to be universal and compulsory, equity requires that it should be free and commonsense demands that it should last long enough to secure its fundamental objective.

A word of warning based on experience elsewhere is necessary against any proposal on economic grounds to apply compulsion only up to the end of the Junior Basis (Primary) stage in the first instance and then to extend it gradually upwards, as circumstances suggest or finances permit. It is true that this method has been followed in England and other countries but those who have had experience of it know how much inefficiency and waste it has entailed. It is significant that for this very reason, Education Authorities in England are still wrestling, over 70 years after the passing of the Education Act of 1870, with the task of reorganizing the lower storeys of the educational structure. Furthermore, basic education from 6-14 is an organic whole and will lose much of its value, if not so treated; in any case an education, which lasts only five years and ends about the age eleven, cannot be regarded as an adequate preparation either for life or livelihood. If, as would appear to be the case, a universal compulsory system of basic education can only be introduced by stages, the progression should clearly be from area to area and not from age to age.

This is an ambitious program. It can be carried out. But it should be remembered that a plan of this sort is roughly the equivalent of planning for free, compulsory, public education in the whole of Europe west of Russia.

This educational program, like the Bombay Plan for industry, and like the Departmental Plan for Agriculture, presupposes two things: It requires a continuing high level of available revenue. The Government cannot carry on these operations unless it has money to spend. In the second place it presupposes authoritative, responsible and accepted Central Government to make the expenditures. All of these programs have been laid out on the framework of the existing Government of India. That Government is the British-sustained regime. It has stability. It has authority. It is a strong Central Government in every sense of the word.

Now those functions must be transferred to an Indian union. The strength and the authority of such a union are still to be determined. If the fields of popular education, of industrial development, of rural credit, power resources, radio broadcasting and public health are reserved to the various units of an Indian federation, as has been proposed, it is obvious that these programs of a Central Government cannot possibly be carried out. Each one will necessarily be split up, Province by Province, and in each case its success will depend upon the amount of local revenue that is available.

The question of economic and sociological change in India is therefore contingent in part upon the form of government that is devised, upon the powers that are allocated to that government, upon how much money it can collect in taxes and how much authorization it can get from its electorate to spend that money.

India's problems then become political as well as sociological and economic. What is the chance of an Indian union? Will it be strong? Can it collect the several billion dollars required for these projected public expenditures? Can it function effectively to transform the face of India as a whole? Can government effect these essential changes in "changeless" India?

---

## V. ELEMENTS OF DIVISION

---

### 1. Moderates and Extremists

THE INVOLVED AND OFTEN BITTER STRUGGLES THAT HAVE BEEN PART OF the approach to constitutional change in India are, in part, a reflection of differences of opinion and social structure within India, many of which have persisted over a long period of years. The ground for a federal union must necessarily be purchased at the price of compromising divergent points of view. Actually this process of attempted compromise has been in progress for a long time and some of the compromises have been extremely difficult to reach.

The division of India into its characteristic religious communities has been widely publicized in the United States. There are some other divisions, however, less obvious than this that have had an important effect in retarding the growth and change of political institutions.

It has been a fixed British position, throughout most of the last twenty-five years, that the modification of India's political structures should be the product of Indian thought. This would have been feasible and relatively easy if there had been some degree of unity in India's political thinking. But during the time that the Indians were coming into the approach to this task, there grew up and eventually persisted in India a major division in political philosophy that stultified political thought and paralyzed progress.

This is the artificial division of India into two political groups commonly called "moderates" and "extremists." Those names have been inaccurate in recent years and the terms that would more nearly correspond to groups of thought as they have functioned in Indian political society would be "Liberal Non-Partisan" and "Congress Nationalist" party.

It was, as we have pointed out, the avowed objective of British policy in India to associate an increasingly large number of Indians with the



functions of government. Carrying out this policy presupposed that the Indians themselves would wish to be so associated. It was presumed, perhaps too naively in the beginning, that all that was required was to provide some sort of machinery through which Indians could take a progressively larger place in administration and legislation.

The Congress party itself was evolved in the beginning as an unofficial part of such machinery. It was actually organized in the latter part of the last century through the efforts and under the leadership of a British civil servant, Alan Octavian Hume. Its avowed purpose was to bring Britons and Indians together in the cause of service to the country, to attract persons possessing natural political talents and to give to such persons within the organization some scope for their leadership.

#### TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

In the beginning, therefore, the Congress party was strictly a cooperative institution designed to effect improvement and change in India's political structures through joint efforts of Britons and Indians. This pattern was followed for about twenty-five years. During that time Indian participation in the affairs of the Congress party became increasingly strong and self-confident. The party evolved from a consultative group to a political instrument. By 1916 there had developed, within the party, two distinct schools of political philosophy. One group, the "moderates," to which reference has been made, believed that the most effective way to bring about changes in India was to work with and through the existing instruments of government. Naturally, it was from such a group that the British could expect to derive members of the Indian Civil Service, the personnel of advisory bodies and their Indian associates in the functions of administration.

The other group, led at that time by an effective political organizer, whom the British called a demagogue, B. G. Tilak, took the opposite point of view. They evolved the thesis that change in government in India could not and should not be brought about from the inside. It was their position that the only effective way to modify the form of government was to attack it.

The two groups came to a showdown in 1916 when Tilak captured the leadership of the Congress party. Since that time, except for very

short interruptions, it has been the official political position of the majority party of Hindus that change and development could be brought about only by resistance to all the existing forms of government.

This division was accentuated by the spectacular rise of Mohandas K. Gandhi. His development of the technique of non-cooperation fitted admirably into the background of complete resistance to the whole structure of government, and so Gandhi became the obvious leader of this so-called "extremist" group.

The revolutionary appeal in a period of rising nationalism proved irresistible to a vast majority of Indians who were politically-minded. As a result the "moderates," or cooperative group, became progressively smaller and smaller; whereas the whole technique of the revolutionary non-cooperationists became, in itself, the hallmark of patriotic nationalism.

There was, and still is for that matter, an actual political aristocracy of those who had gone to jail. The merit of an individual's beliefs and the fervor of his devotion to India were determined, under this ideology, not by the constructive contribution that he had made to the solution of problems, but by the amount of suffering that he had been able to endure as a result of clashes with authority that he, himself, had provoked. With that attitude came, in turn, the inevitable feeling of superiority to those who chose a less drastic course, and the ultimate sharp division between "non-cooperationists," who became automatically patriots, and "cooperationists" who became automatically suspect.

The effect of this division on political thought, and on the actual functioning of government, was little short of disastrous.

In the first place, it limited to a steadily decreasing group, the Indians upon whom the British could draw for public service. We have already observed that the British were unfortunately slow in Indianizing the Civil Service, but by the time that they set out to rectify this error the number of Indians upon whom they would draw was steadily shrinking. The vast majority of Hindus preferred to exercise their gifts of leadership outside rather than inside the government.

The net effect was to put a penalty rather than a premium upon government service. Once a young Indian had completed his education, applied for the Civil Service and been taken into it, or once an older Indian, with an already proved capacity for leadership, had been accepted and

nominated for a post of authority, such a person was labeled as undesirable by his own compatriots. Almost the least offensive of the phrases applied to such men was that of "British stooge."

#### AN INTOLERABLE POSITION

What was essentially a difference in the theory of how government could be changed had thus, in practice, put some able and conscientious Indians in an almost intolerable position. Most of the Indians in places of responsibility and authority were unquestionably ardent nationalists in the sense they desired to see the ultimate development of India as an independent nation state. Most of them were men of positive integrity and of a very considerable degree of ability. Moreover, most of them had the advantage of training and experience in public service. Naturally they resented, often very deeply, the attitude of their fellow-countrymen toward them.

A very high ranking Indian civil servant (he was actually the head of a government department at the time) said to me, in a burst of confidence.

"It is almost impossible for me to convey to you the extent of my chagrin at the attitude I am obliged to face among my own countrymen. I yield to none of them in my love for India and in my desire to see India become a great and independent nation. I believe this can be done most rapidly and most successfully by using, to the best of our capacities, every solitary bit of authority that we have obtained from His Majesty's Government, and I believe that our influence must be used to obtain much more of that authority as rapidly as possible. Nevertheless, because of that viewpoint I am held up, even by members of my own family, as a renegade who has 'sold out' to the British *Raj*. That, of course, is laughable. My private income is four times my government salary. I don't need to work for a living if I don't want to, and certainly I don't have to have a government job.

"I have believed for a long time that we would be able to obtain, from His Majesty's Government, our own independence if we chose to work at it. I do not believe that we can bring about the changes that we desire by setting out to paralyze all the operations of government, British or otherwise, within this subcontinent.

"Why should I be penalized for this sincere conviction?"

The damage that was done by this division of opinion was, however, not confined to the sensibilities of independent Indians such as the one whom I have just quoted. Damage was done also to all of the instruments of government because it became increasingly difficult for the Government of India to derive its strength from Indians who had any substantial personal political following. It was stated in the law, for example, that the Viceroy's Executive Council should be made up, in part, of "representative" Indians. That was a sound idea in the law but so long as the division between cooperationists and non-cooperationists existed it was virtually impossible to put it into effect. The difficulty was that the "representative" Indians didn't represent anything or anybody. They became, rather, "typically competent" or "independently outstanding" Indians. They could not bring to bear upon the formation of policy in the Viceroy's Council any concerted impact of Indian public opinion. There was, in most cases, literally no group for whom they could speak with any degree of authority.

As a result, the Viceregal policy, evolved in most cases through prolonged consultation with these selfsame Council members, was never accepted by the rank and file of Indians as having any substantially Indian character.

#### LEADERS NOT AVAILABLE

It is this division of opinion, of course, that has lain behind the prolonged discussions of the formation of a "national and responsible" government at the center in India. The actual leaders of India's political groups, men like Gandhi and Nehru, were not available for public service because, in the first place, they had not submitted themselves to popular election under the existing laws; and, in the second place, because they had espoused the whole thesis of remaining outside of the government.

Even in the General Assembly, when it was convened in 1946, the Congress party had in the Assembly no member who was an outstanding leader in the party's councils. Presumably, members of a responsible government should be drawn from the Assembly, and the men who ought to have been able to speak for the largest political party in India had chosen not to become candidates. In this respect the position of the

Muslim League was somewhat better. Mr. Jinnah did actually stand as a candidate and take a place in the Assembly.

In addition to the formation of a responsible government, any normal operations within the constitutional limits of the Government of India, prior to a revolutionary change, became extremely difficult because the largest political party had taken the position that those selfsame instruments of government were not worthy of support. The Congress party gave specific public emphasis to this point of view when, for example, it boycotted officially the Viceroy's opening address in the 1946 session.

Obviously India could not have a successful government unless it were the determined attitude of very large bodies of the public that the instruments of government should function effectively and smoothly and that they should have the sincere support of the majority of the literate and articulate public. The whole policy that was followed, however, was designed to cast continuous suspicion upon those instruments and to inculcate in the minds of the public a deep-seated mistrust of anything that bore the official label.

What the division of opinion here really worked down to, in practice, was that a very small minority of Indians were determined to make government, in the hands of Indians, so good that Britain could not help but recognize its merits and enlarge its responsibilities. The vast majority, on the other hand, was committed to a program of obstruction whose purpose was to make government so bad that Britain would be obliged to dispose of it. Forming a representative and responsible government under those conditions proved almost insurmountably difficult.

Out of this attitude toward government there developed, under Gandhi's leadership, the whole technique of non-cooperation. Non-cooperation itself was a political weapon. It was an instrument designed to force a change. It eventually became much more than that, however. It became the embodiment of a philosophical attitude on the part of masses of the public toward all government and all law in any or all of its manifestations.

Gandhi started his experiments with non-cooperation and civil disobedience during the period of his residence in South Africa. It was an essentially Oriental concept, the concept of the completely independent individual negation of the validity of law. It was the technique of ignor-

ing the government out of operation. What it amounted to was a civil general strike. After he had developed the means of organization to make this technique effective, Gandhi introduced it in India. It was not a successful revolutionary weapon in India in the sense of forcing an immediate change, but it did provide the means by which Gandhi was able to consolidate his own tremendous spiritual and personal leadership.

#### THE GROWTH OF SATYAGRAHA

Moreover, Gandhi was astute enough to choose for one of his first mass operations a protest against a law that was unpopular and that was, on the face of it, a burden on the lowest classes of society, the tax on salt. So Gandhi led some of his followers in the celebrated "Salt March to the Sea" where publicly and ceremoniously he distilled sea water and made a small quantity of salt in defiance of the law. He was asking for arrest and naturally he got it. This was a new means of attacking the law by publicly and flamboyantly disobeying it. It developed, eventually, into the whole technique of non-cooperation to which has been given the Indian name, *Satyagraha*.

*Satyagraha* took a variety of forms.

In the commercial field it took the form of the *hartal*, that is, the simple closing of all shops and refusing to do business. This was carried out, usually, in periods of one day or two days at a time, to show a mass protest through the direct process of paralyzing the whole life of India's commercial communities. But *Satyagraha* took other forms as well. Whole groups of Indians, for example, would lie down on railroad tracks or tramways, and thus paralyze communications. But the real apex of ceremonial *Satyagraha* was the open violation of law and the invitation to arrest. It was this technique that Gandhi developed to its most effective point. By insisting that he and his followers be put in jail he gave them the automatic status of martyrdom and put the simplest enforcement of law into the classification of bitter political persecution.

It should be pointed out that Gandhi and his followers were not arrested and imprisoned for the holding of political beliefs. They were imprisoned for direct violations of law that they themselves publicly committed for the purpose of being arrested. In many cases arrests were made under the most trifling sections of the code in order to minimize penalties,

but the Government was placed in the position of either making arrests or admitting that all law was inoperative.

This second position was precisely the political objective of the whole *Satyagraha* movement. Its purpose was to commit the large body of Indians to the thesis that the moral foundation of British rule in India was invalid and that, therefore, all law involved in that rule was equally invalid. That continued to be the Congress party's specific position right up to the final negotiations for the change in government.

Now that may be good moral philosophy and it may be effective revolutionary nationalism, but it is manifestly an impossible way in which to function in a working political community. What it means is a continuous state of undeclared revolution, in which the simplest rules for social behavior may be disregarded provided they emanate from a government that does not have public support.

It is too soon to tell what effect the acceptance of this thesis will have on the Indian attitude toward law and government as a whole. It is, of course, the official Congress party position that once the character of government becomes completely Indian all India will respect it automatically. But Indians have been taught, over a period of two generations, that it is right and proper and patriotic to disregard law if one disapproves of its source. There is some reason for apprehension, therefore, and some reason to believe that the technique of *Satyagraha* may be employed by dissident groups within India, directed not against an alien, but against a domestic government.

#### THE DOCTRINE OF AHIMSA

The whole issue of *Satyagraha* and its use was, of course, complicated by the inclusion with it of another of Gandhi's philosophical concepts. He not only preached non-cooperation but he preached non-violence. This was the doctrine of *Ahimsa*.

This concept was the mainspring of Gandhi's own personal philosophy. Gandhi insisted that no action, however revolutionary, should be a violent action. One's opponents were to be won over by a display of love on the part of the individual. Gandhi, himself, carried this doctrine to extremes and he was able to impart it in some degree to large bodies of his followers.

Non-violent non-cooperation again served to put the government in the worst possible light whenever it became necessary to take any action of any sort against the non-cooperationists. It became characteristic of discussions of India to speak of police charges against defenseless and harmless persons who were, quite literally, doing nothing.

This phase of Gandhi's philosophy was likewise the basis of the whole problem of India's position in the war. Gandhi was, from the beginning, the complete and perfect pacifist. He believed in non-violence within India and non-violence outside of India. Thus, at the outbreak of the war, he sent a message to the people of Britain urging them to lay down their arms, invite the Germans in and eventually to conquer their enemies spiritually by a display of love. This led to his celebrated declaration that for his part he could see no difference in merit between the cause of Britain and that of Germany, that both sides were equally wrong and that he could not but hope for the defeat of both. It led also to Gandhi's declaration that the entrance of the United States into the war was morally indefensible and that the United States should also have undertaken to conquer the Japanese by love. It led ultimately to his declaration that if authority were placed in his hands he would personally go to Tokyo to persuade the Japanese, through the exercise of love, to retire from their areas of conquest.

Some of these points of view seemed fantastic to Occidentals. Some of Gandhi's comments were specifically offensive to Britons and Americans. They did, however, represent a body of thought to which many Indians were committed. Gandhi's integrity was never challenged in India and the Indians understood why he took the position that he did, even if Occidentals found it beyond belief.

Nevertheless, when India itself was threatened with invasion, early in 1942, there was some very considerable soul-searching in India on the question of whether or not India could be defended by non-violent means. Gandhi had suggested that if the Japanese came to India his followers should simply refuse to have anything to do with them. They should avoid them on the streets, refuse to take orders from them, give themselves up to torture and death if necessary and eventually, by sheer moral impact, convince the Japanese of the entire wrongness of their course and



so force them to retire from India, more in sorrow than in anger. This was popularly called "fighting the Japs with folded hands."

Most of the persons who had had any experience with the Japanese, and who had made any study of their behavior in eastern Asia, were not inclined to have much confidence in the success of such a mode of resistance. Gandhi was ridiculed, in fact, in the Western world for supposing that such a thing could be possible. He was not ridiculed in India, however. Gandhi had some discussion along this line with Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek early in 1942 and they patiently pointed out to him that their experience with the Japanese obliged them to disagree with his basic beliefs.

#### OPPOSITION TO THE AXIS

But there was another phase to the Indian reaction to Gandhi's position. There were, in India, a considerable number of persons who were generally opposed to the whole moral background of the Axis powers. Their natural leader was Nehru, who is, of course, an ardent socialist. Nehru hated the whole business of fascism and he saw it clearly exemplified in both Germany and Japan. Nehru felt, therefore, that Indians should be rallied to fight in defense of their country and to fight against fascism. Nehru's point of view was also sustained by the small but vocal body of Indian communists who became eagerly enthusiastic about fighting the Axis powers once Russia had been attacked.

Now during all this time India had had a large and a good volunteer army that was already fighting the Axis, and already fighting in defense of India. Naturally the families of many in the Indian Army, and their associates, could not share Gandhi's view that the whole basis of the Army's operation was morally wrong. Actually, the Army was getting volunteers in larger numbers than it could train and equip, and India was making a very substantial contribution to the Allied war effort as a whole.

Gandhi's point of view and Nehru's point of view met, at least, on one common ground—they felt that the moral basis for the war demanded Britain's withdrawal from India. Moreover, it seemed that Britain, in a time of crisis, might be more willing to make substantial concessions in order to obtain popular support than she would be ready to

make in a period of serenity and security. In any Oriental bargaining encounter it is always considered advisable to make your opponents bargain from a position of weakness rather than from a position of strength. It was obvious that the British were in a critically weak position, and so the time seemed exactly ripe to make the largest possible number of demands upon them.

Actually, in the April meeting of the Congress party Working Committee in 1942, Gandhi and Nehru came into a sharp clash. Gandhi was convinced that Britain had already lost the war in any case. He felt that if terms were to be made they would probably be made with Germany and Japan. Nehru felt, on the other hand, that all of India should be rallied to a vigorous defense effort, but declared that the rallying could be accomplished only if the Indians were fully assured that they were fighting for their own country and not for the British *Raj*. Out of these differences of opinion came a momentous decision in India's political history. Gandhi's point of view prevailed and Nehru subsequently accepted it. Gandhi's point of view was not merely that the Indians should withhold co-operation from the war effort unless there were a prior withdrawal of Britain's power in India, but that an actual campaign of civil disobedience should be initiated to threaten the war effort and thus coerce a British surrender.

#### THE QUIT INDIA RESOLUTION

This decision, made at Allahabad, led to a subsequent meeting of the Congress party Working Committee with Gandhi at Wardha in July, 1942. There it was determined to place before the general assembly of the Congress party a resolution outlining the party's position. That resolution was to call on the British Government for immediate withdrawal from India, after which India's defense would be organized under Indian leadership. If the British did not accept this proposal, the Congress party was to be directed to open once more a campaign of non-violent non-cooperation; and such a campaign, said the resolution, could be conducted only under the leadership of Gandhi. The resolution, therefore, proposed, in effect, to entrust the leadership of India, in a time of crisis, war and imminent invasion, to a man who was an avowed and determined lifelong pacifist.

This resolution was adopted by the assembly of the Congress party at Bombay on August 8, 1942.

This development placed the British, and indeed all of the Allies, in an extremely difficult position. The alternative that had been given to them by the Congress party was to turn over the leadership of the country to a man who had been committed for years to complete non-violent non-resistance on the one hand, or to face the possibility of a civil general strike throughout India on the other. The decision as to what to do under those circumstances was not easy to make. The British had to decide whether it was safer to take a chance on Gandhi's leadership, and hope that a real resistance movement could be developed, perhaps through the personal influence of Nehru; or to take a chance on a domestic uprising which, however non-violent its character might be, would undertake deliberately to paralyze communications, to stop industry and to disrupt all administration, including the prosecution of the war, at a time when the Japanese were actually on India's borders.

The decision that was made was to accept the risk of the second alternative, but to undertake to forestall the magnitude of its consequences by prompt and decisive action.

Contrary to popular belief, this decision was not dictated from London. The decision was actually made in New Delhi by the Viceroy acting in his Executive Council. The Indian members of his government concurred in the belief that the only possible way to deal with the situation was to break the general strike at its inception. The way to do this, they believed, was immediately to arrest and imprison all of the key figures in the Congress party organization. There was reason to believe that the form that the *Satyagraha* movement would take had been planned in some detail, and these details had been communicated to a certain number of group leaders at various points in India. It was felt, however, that if these leaders could be removed quickly from the picture the resulting mass movement would be relatively formless and consequently that public order could be rather quickly restored. This was a chance that the British had to take as a war-time necessity, and with many misgivings they took it.

Within a few hours after the adoption of the Bombay resolution most of the important Congress party leaders were in detention. Unfortunately

this meant detaining Nehru, on whom the British felt they could and should have counted for very substantial support to rally the public to the war effort. Nehru, however, had publicly accepted Gandhi's leadership and acceded to the Bombay resolution. As a matter of fact, he sat on the platform at Bombay with his head bowed and his eyes closed at the time that the resolution was adopted.

Many of the Congress party leaders, such as Nehru himself, had been placed in a paradoxical position by this combination of non-cooperation and non-violence in Gandhi's philosophy. Many of them really believed that India should be rallied to defend herself with all her means at her disposal, and yet they found themselves put into jail in the middle of a war because the man whose leadership they had accepted in the struggle against Britain was totally unacceptable in the struggle against the Axis.

What it really came to was that even in the middle of a war the Congress party had taken the official position that Britain was Enemy Number One and that the Axis was Enemy Number Two. It is impossible to believe that many of the intelligent leaders in the Congress party really felt that. There can be little doubt of the fact that a very considerable number of the 40,000 Indians who went to jail in 1942 went in support of a cause in which they did not really believe.

#### THE DISORDERS OF 1942

Meanwhile, of course, Gandhi's entire doctrine of non-violence promptly went up in smoke in the struggle against the British. It was the Congress party's official position that resentment against the prompt arrest of so many conspicuous persons flamed spontaneously throughout India. In less than a week all of India was swept by a wave of riots and disorders. Public buildings were burned, communications were cut, trains were derailed, police were torn to pieces by mobs. There were lathi charges and shootings. A conservative estimate is that about eight hundred persons were killed in the course of the disorders.

The British did not accept the theory of a "spontaneous" uprising. They believed that a very considerable part of the disorders was the carrying out of the original Congress party plan. There were two phases in this belief, the evidence of organization and the fear of Japanese influence.

The so-called "spontaneous" mobs struck skilfully and successfully at points of great vulnerability. The first major target was communications. Telephone and telegraph wires were cut night after night, and in many cases they were cut with real technical dexterity. Trains were derailed on the major trunk lines and cross-ties, and rails were taken up. The mobs did not, as a rule, attack such concentrations of strength as barracks, encampments or even the major government buildings. They did attempt to burn railroad stations, warehouses and some key offices such as, for example, the Office of Railway Accounts in Delhi. There appeared to be, behind the so-called "spontaneous" uprisings, quite a bit of co-ordination and planning. The damage was done where it hurt.

The other phase of the uprisings that caused very great concern was the possible connection with Japanese agents. Throughout the time of the disorders the Japanese radio was blasting away at India with continuous encouragement to the rioters and with precise and detailed instructions as to what sort of tools to use to cut telegraph lines and how best to remove the fishplates from railways.

The Government of India eventually issued a small publication pointing out the Congress party's responsibility for the disorders and the close connection between the character of the outbreak and the nature of Japanese propaganda. Congress party headquarters at Allahabad had been raided and the confidential minutes of the April meeting were discovered. In them there was a record of Gandhi's expression of belief that the Axis would win the war. Great stress was therefore laid on this point in the Government's declarations. Looking back at it now, it is possible to suggest that this publication and its implications were not well-advised from the political point of view. There were, undoubtedly, Japanese agents in many parts of India. It is much more reasonable to believe, however, that the Japanese took advantage of a situation that already existed than to suggest that they inspired the situation, or that there was any close connection between the Congress party's actions and Japanese war plans.

In any case, the Government was forced to deal with the disorders primarily in military terms. There was no alternative to prompt and decisive action once it had been determined not to run the risk of accession to Gandhi's program and his leadership.

## A MATTER OF REPORTING

Many of the accounts of the disturbances and their consequences that were published in other parts of the world were considerably magnified and distorted. One famous American journalist, for example, spoke of having witnessed an incident in which "British police fired on an unarmed Indian mob." That was perfectly true, but the journalist failed to mention the fact that the "unarmed mob" was equipped with torches and was undertaking to set fire to a public building in which there were four hundred persons. And of course the "British" police were Indians, which might have given a slightly different emphasis to the story.

The riots and disorders were bad enough in all conscience, and there was no need to make them worse. There was bitter Indian complaint, for example, over the fact that aircraft had fired on Indians on the ground. There was certainly at least one authenticated instance in which that took place. It happened when a plane was patrolling a stretch on the trunk railroad between Madras and Calcutta that could not be policed by ground troops. There was a suspicious gathering on the railroad, well out in the country, of a mob that was believed to be in the act of tearing up track with the idea of derailing trains. That one group was definitely dispersed by machine-gun fire from the plane. Reports immediately spread around India, however, that Indian villagers were being strafed from the air, and shortly thereafter a mob at a railway station pulled two young Royal Air Force officers off a train and killed them on the platform.

The situation as a whole was by no means as bad as many of the inflammatory reports made it out to be. On the other hand, it was far from giving the ground for some of the complacency that was occasionally reflected in official reports.

Responsible Congress party leaders, both in jail and out, appealed repeatedly to the public to stop all violent action. Gandhi expressed his horror at the course that events had taken and disavowed any official connection with any rioting whatsoever.

But it took two months to restore order, and it will take two generations to get rid of some of the bitterness that was engendered.

The effect on the political situation was, of course, completely paralyzing. The Congress party was effectively deprived of its leadership and

then was made an illegal organization. From August 9, 1942 to early in 1945 the largest political organization in India was legally nonexistent. What had to be accepted was, in effect, a military government as a war-time necessity with no further possibility of political change.

It should be made clear, however, that this situation was not the product of the emergency of wartime itself. It was the product of the whole developed thesis of non-cooperation as a correct party principle in dealing with the question of changes in government. The riots of 1942 and the stalemate of 1943, 1944 and 1945 trace back directly to Tilak in 1916.

In the case of fighting the war, however, there was a political background as well as this philosophical one. Non-cooperation involved, of course, the use of the political boycott. Members of the Congress party had refused to run for public office and had refused to accept positions of public trust. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, of 1919, had given to Indians a very considerable opportunity to exercise influence both in the provincial governments and in the government at the center. Party members, however, chose not to avail themselves of this opportunity and to make the Reforms as ineffective as possible.

This situation was changed with the adoption of the India Act of 1935. In spite of some violent objections on the part of the Congress party to some of the provisions of the Act, it was generally accepted that the party should enter the field and run its candidates for the Provincial Legislatures. Unsympathetic observers have suggested that this change of front in the matter of non-cooperation was brought about, in part, by the rise in political importance of the Muslim League. There was, at least, a possibility that if the Congress party did not take advantage of the election machinery, the Provincial Legislatures would be organized throughout by the Independent Liberals and the Muslim Leaguers. The result would have been a tremendous loss of political prestige to the Congress party. It is my personal belief that this interpretation is shortsighted and ungenerous. There is reason to believe that the Congress party really hoped to make a success of the provisions of the India Act of 1935.

In any case, the Congress party gained a sweeping political success in the first Provincial elections under this Act. It won eight out of the eleven Provinces outright and set up Congress party Ministries.

These Ministries, on the whole, functioned very competently. India

had a closer approach to popular government between 1937 and 1939 than ever before in its history. Several of the Ministries, such as those of Premier Rajagopalacharia in Madras and Sir Sikander Hyat Khan in the Punjab were distinguished. Responsibility was accepted and authority was exercised.

One of the Provincial Governors, Sir Harry Haig, summarized the events and achievements of that period as follows:

To sum up conclusions on events and tendencies of such complexity and variety is perhaps to risk misunderstanding owing to the necessary brevity of expression. But if I am to take that risk I would say that the experiment of introducing full democratic institutions among a people who still instinctively think in authoritarian terms, who view the Government as somebody's *Raj*, has been launched with a success beyond expectation. Congress and the Services, starting about as far apart as it was possible to be, learned to work together. The Congress learned the stubborn facts of administration. The Services learned the implication of democratic control. The party which has hitherto always been in opposition, and often in extreme and even unconstitutional opposition, to the Government took over the reins of government. The revolution in the ideas of the masses caused by this change was kept, on the whole, within the bounds of safety. It is no mean achievement, and both the Congress and the Services share in the credit for this.

#### THE ISSUE OF WAR

The outbreak of the war in 1939 put the Government of India in a difficult position. The paramount power, Great Britain, was at war with Germany. The Indian States were held to be automatically at war with the enemies of the throne under the treaty provisions. Immediately after the opening of hostilities in Europe the Viceroy, acting on behalf of the Government of India, declared that India was at war. This action was taken without a declaration of war by any elected Indian body. The legislature functioning at the center was not organized under the Act of 1935 but under the Act of 1919. It was in the real sense not a representative body and in any case it was not consulted. The Provincial governments were representative, but the authority to declare war did not, of course, extend to the Provinces.

The action of the Viceroy was therefore interpreted in Indian political circles as entirely arbitrary. He had taken Indians into a war without their consent.

How far the subsequent Congress party actions were influenced by



Gandhi's pacifism and his theories of non-violence will probably never be accurately determined. The actions of the party were not based on the theory that the war itself was wrong, although that was Gandhi's personal theory, but on the fact that a decisive action had been taken for India without any acceptance of it by Indians themselves. The Congress party, therefore, took the position that this constituted an outrageous violation of the whole spirit of the law of 1935, which had granted such a high degree of self-government in the Provinces and it therefore called upon its eight Congress party Ministries to resign forthwith. Thus political boycott, as a part of the struggle between India and Britain, was reinstituted.

Under the law the only course open to the Government was to rule in the Provinces where Ministries had resigned by Governor's ordinance. This was an exact reversal of all of the political course that had been followed since 1935. As a matter of fact, the accord between Governors and Ministries in the period 1937 to 1939 had been so striking that Governors had not been obliged to use their veto powers on any major question. From 1939 on, however, the Governors were obliged to carry on all the functions of government through executive fiat rather than with legislative sanction.

A series of moves was made by the Governor-General in an attempt to re-establish some degree of political co-operation. The policy of Dominion Status as the goal of Britain in India was vigorously reaffirmed. The Governor-General called upon the boycotting party to join in the organization of a genuine Indian war effort, and while making it plain that constitutional changes would not be made during the war, he insisted that they could and would be made following the war.

The Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, had made his first affirmation in this respect shortly after the declaration of war. In answer to the question: "What are the intentions of His Majesty's Government?" he replied:

I cannot do better in reply to that question than to refer to the statement made on behalf of His Majesty's Government, and with their full authority, by the late Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons on February 6, 1935. That statement makes the position clear beyond a shadow of doubt. It refers to the pledge given in the Preamble of the Act of 1919, and it makes clear that it was no part of the plan of His Majesty's Government to repeal that pledge. It confirms equally the interpretation placed in 1929 by Lord Irwin as

Viceroy, again on the authority of the Government of the day, on that Preamble, that "the natural issue of India's progress as there contemplated is the attainment of Dominion Status." I need not dilate on the words of that statement. They are clear and positive. They are enshrined in the Parliamentary record. They stand as a definite and categorical exposition of the policy of His Majesty's Government today, and of their intention today in this end — the future constitutional development and position of India. I would add only that the Instrument of Instructions issued to me as Governor-General by His Majesty the King Emperor in May 1937 lays upon me as Governor-General a direction so to exercise the trust which His Majesty has reposed in me "that the partnership between India and the United Kingdom within our Empire may be furthered to the end that India may attain its due place among our Dominions."

His Majesty's Government recognize that when the time comes to resume consideration of the plan for the future Federal Government of India, and of the plan destined to give effect to the assurances given in Parliament by the late Secretary of State, to which I have just referred, it will be necessary to reconsider in the light of the then circumstances to what extent the details of the plan embodied in the Act of 1935 remain appropriate. And I am authorized now by His Majesty's Government to say that at the end of the war they will be very willing to enter into consultation with representatives of several communities, parties, and interests in India, and with the Indian Princess, with a view to securing their aid and co-operation in the framing of such modifications as may seem desirable.

The Congress party's Working Committee met shortly at Wardha to consider this declaration, and on October 23, 1939, it gave its reply: —

This statement is wholly unsatisfactory and calculated to rouse resentment among all those who were anxious to gain, and are intent upon gaining India's independence. The Viceregal statement is an unequivocal reiteration of the old imperialistic policy. The Committee regard the mention of the differences among several parties as a screen to hide the true intention of Great Britain. What the Committee had asked for was a declaration of war aims as a test of Britain's *bona fides* regarding India, irrespective of the attitude of opposing parties and groups. The Congress has always stood for the amplest guarantee of the rights of the minorities. The freedom the Congress claimed was not for the Congress or any particular group or community, but for the nation and for all communities in India that go to build that nation. The only way to establish that freedom and to ascertain the will of the nation as a whole is through a democratic process which gives full opportunity to all. The Committee must, therefore, regard the Viceroy's statement as in every way unfortunate. In the circumstances, the Committee cannot possibly give any support to Great Britain, for it would amount to an endorsement of the Imperialist policy which the Congress has always sought to end. As a first step in this direction the Committee call upon the Congress Ministries to tender their resignations.

The first year of the war, therefore, was one of political stalemate. Once again, the Government of India undertook to make some advance. In August, 1940, Lord Linlithgow again affirmed Britain's determination to promote self-government for India and to make constitutional changes immediately after the war. On that basis he appealed, once more, for support of the war effort. This is the so-called "August Offer." Some pertinent passages read:

There has been very strong insistence that the framing of that scheme (a new constitutional scheme) should be primarily the responsibility of Indians themselves, and should originate from Indian conception of the social, economic and political structure of Indian life. His Majesty's Government are in sympathy with that desire, and wish to see it given the fullest practical expression subject to the due fulfilment of the obligations which Great Britain's long connection with India has imposed upon her and for which His Majesty's Government cannot divest themselves of responsibility.

It goes without saying that they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government.

His Majesty's Government authorize me to declare that they will most readily assent to the setting up, after the conclusion of the War, without the least possible delay, a body representative of the principal elements in India's national life, in order to devise the framework of the new constitution, and they will lend every aid in their power to hasten decisions on all relevant matters to the utmost degree. Meanwhile they will welcome and promote in any way possible every sincere and practical step that may be taken by representative Indians themselves to reach a basis of friendly agreement, firstly, on the form which the post-war representative body should take and the methods by which it should arrive at its conclusions, and secondly, upon the principles and outlines of the Constitution itself.

This declaration proved equally unacceptable to the Congress party. It was rejected forthwith, and as a response to it, Gandhi once more took control of the Congress party and late in 1940 again instituted a minor *Satyagraha* movement in which key persons were singled out to undergo ceremonial and symbolic violation of the law and subsequent detention. The law in question was the Defense of India Regulations, promulgated by the office of the Viceroy. Conspicuous in these regulations was the prohibition of speeches directed against the war effort or the holding of public meetings without permission. The method that was employed, there-

fore, was that of using Congress party members to make a prohibited speech or to conduct unauthorized meetings and thus to invite arrest.

The authorities had no stomach for this operation. The violations of the law were in almost every case merely technical and halfhearted; the arrests were unwilling and the periods of detention were usually short. Eventually this whole movement petered out within the party itself as Gandhi yielded to the pressure of his associates in recognizing that there was some danger, at least to India, in an Axis victory.

### III THEORY OF LOSING THE WAR

It was still an accepted thesis, however, not only in India but even more conspicuously in other parts of the world, and especially in the United States, that India's political cooperation in organizing the war effort and in fighting the war was positively essential to an Allied victory. Many Americans took the position that unless Britain were prepared to make immediate and substantial concessions to the Congress party, the war in Asia would be lost. The ineffectiveness of Burmese cooperation in the resistance to the Japanese was held up as a terrifying example of what could and probably would happen on a major scale in India. In contrast, the valor of Philippine resistance and the value of Philippine cooperation were pointed out as the shining example of what could be expected from an Asiatic people provided their own nationalistic aspirations had been sufficiently taken into account.

The Congress party itself naturally did nothing to discourage this point of view. Many impassioned appeals were made for a modification of the British attitude on the ground that the war would be won or lost, not on the frontiers of India, but in the decisions at Whitehall.

This viewpoint was shortsighted. It failed to take into account that the Indian Army was not a civilian army. The Indian Army was to prove to be an effective military instrument, regardless of the character of public political opinion in India.

The British, with possibly a more realistic appraisal of the military situation than some of their critics, both in India and the United States, decided that their military risk was smaller by standing firmly on the ground they had taken than by trying to conduct a political transformation in India at the same time that they were fighting a defensive war.

Accordingly, they adopted the plan of undertaking to organize a war effort in India without making constitutional changes, but in the effort to meet Indian objections as well as transatlantic criticism, they designed an elaborate proposal for those constitutional changes that were to come into effect after the war. This War Cabinet Proposal of 1942 was an acceptance of the Indian right to self-government as a fixed principle, but its adoption at that time was made a parallel part of a double program that called also for the prosecution of an effective war effort in India by Indians.

Thus the celebrated Cripps Proposals came to grips with the accepted thesis of non-cooperation. This was one of the rocks upon which the proposal foundered. Many of the Indians undoubtedly did want to organize an effective war effort. It is extremely doubtful that Gandhi did. Thus, on the immediate problem of providing more vigorous defense for India, the whole question of political boycott came once more to the fore. India again suffered tragically, in the political sense, by the philosophical division between the "extremists" and "moderates."

Out of this division there arose, finally, in 1942, the ultimate thesis of Congress party nationalism. The events of twenty-five years had been moving steadily toward self-government. But the pressure of war and the sharpness of political division served eventually to crystallize that trend into the famous doctrine of "Quit India." That became the accepted slogan of the Congress party nationalists and became accepted as the basis upon which constitutional change would have to take place.

At this point, the wheel had again come full cycle. The Congress party was back in the position taken by Tilak in 1916. His position was that constitutional change could be effected only by removing *in toto* the existing governmental instruments and substituting for them an entirely new creation.

#### THREAT OF SUICIDE

This was, quite naturally, unacceptable to the British Government in the middle of a war. They knew that non-cooperation could be a monumental nuisance in time of peace, but they felt that turning over the whole body of government to a completely unproved Indian political group in the very middle of hostilities would be nothing short of suicidal.

The Indians felt that the British magnified out of all correct proportion

the revolutionary changes that would be involved in a transfer of sovereignty. The British felt, on the other hand, that Indian nationalists had minimized, out of all relationship to the facts, the difficulties that would be involved in such a transfer. Moreover, the British had no confidence in Gandhi's willingness to fight a war, and no confidence in the Congress party's ability to shake off his leadership.

This clash, therefore, served to freeze political institutions for the duration and to perpetuate a deadlock whose effect on the emotions of the Indians became progressively more and more explosive.

The basic problem at issue in this whole controversy was how far Indians could participate in a government that they had systematically boycotted as a matter of principle.

It should be noted, moreover, that the difficult division between Muslims and Hindus had not yet assumed acute political proportions during this period when the division between "extremists" and "moderates" was making constitutional change so difficult, if not impossible.

This basic philosophic division among Indians themselves has not been well enough understood outside India. It is not an artificial division. It is a deep-seated one. It takes in an Indian attitude toward government, an attitude toward law and an attitude toward life. Some of its roots are in the Indian rejection of the whole political philosophy of the Western world. It cannot be disposed of by a mere wave of the hand, as Gandhi undertook to dispose of it in the early summer of 1942.

It is quite clear that Indians will never participate wholeheartedly in a government that is not entirely of their own making. It is possible, also, that they will not give substantial and almost automatic support to any political institutions that derive from a different social and philosophic background. Non-cooperation is a developed technique in India. It remains to be seen against what government it will next be employed.

---

## VI. ELEMENTS OF DIVISION

---

### 2. States and Provinces

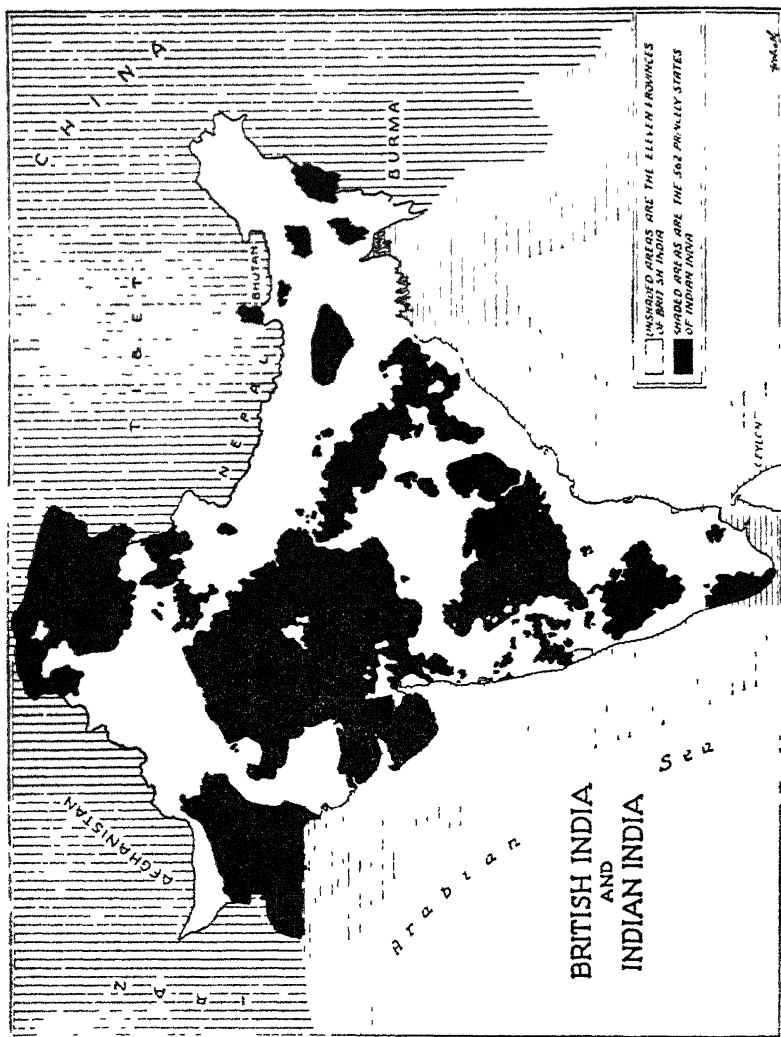
IF IT IS TRUE THAT AMERICANS HAVE OVERLOOKED LARGELY THE SIGNIFICANT philosophical division that we have just discussed, it is equally true that one of the simplest divisions in India has not been recognized in its full importance. This is the rudimentary division of India in two completely different political structures — British India and Indian India.

British India has been composed of eleven self-governing Provinces and Administrative Districts. It has been an organized entity, directly responsible to the office of the Governor-General, through him to the British Cabinet and thus to the House of Commons. It is this part of India that has most of the large cities, the major ports, the political organization of a functioning democracy, and the clamor of nationalism.

Indian India, on the other hand, is made up of 562 hereditary principalities. This is the fabled India, the India of rajahs and elephants, emeralds, tigers, the resounding titles and medieval splendor. Actually, Indian India comprises 45 per cent of the total area of the subcontinent. It has 25 per cent of the population. It represents a group of completely different political structures and somewhat different social structures from those that are to be found in British India.

Nor is Indian India a compact geographical unit. These various Princely States are scattered from the mountains in the north to the extreme southern tip of the peninsula. Dozens of them are islands within Provinces of British India. Some of them indeed are States within States. The State of Indore, for example, is actually a little archipelago made up of a number of different and noncontiguous units and lying, in its entirety, within the periphery of several other States.

Some of the States are very large. Kashmir and Hyderabad, for example, are each twice the size of Pennsylvania. On the other hand, a State such as Lawa, in Rajputana, is smaller than Manhattan Island, while





Bilbari, in Gujerat, has an area of 1.6 miles. a population of about thirty and an annual revenue of about twenty-five dollars.

Both the geographical and political character of these Princely States reflect the nature of the British conquest of India. That conquest was essentially commercial rather than political. The instrument of British exploitation was the East India Company. The motive of the Company was profit, and its function, trade. To maintain the trade and obtain the profit, the Company required two things. First, it had to have the maintenance of public order since it was obviously impossible to acquire goods for shipment if the Company's warehouses might be burned down at any time; second, it had to have an enforceable law of contracts so that guarantees of delivery could be made and so that payments could be assured.

In some areas, the Company undertook to obtain these ends by taking outright physical control of the land that it occupied. The Company hired and organized its own troops for police purposes, built its stockades and carried out the physical functions of government in areas that were obtained by cession from their former sovereigns. Other very much larger areas were manifestly opposed to this, and so the Company entered into compacts with local sovereigns who would agree to carry out a contractual relationship with the Company.

In this latter respect the Company was acting as the agent of the Crown and treaties and compacts were made between the various local sovereigns and the Crown through its agent, the East India Company.

India, it should be remembered, was throughout the period 1700 to 1850 in the process of the disintegration of the Mogul Empire. This process of disintegration gave additional stature to local sovereigns who had set themselves up in rebellion against the Mogul overlordship, or who had maintained, over a period of years, an easy vassalage coupled with Mogul recognition of their own local hereditary sovereignty. These local sovereigns, in some cases, fought against the Moguls. In some cases they fought against each other. In a number of cases the East India Company fomented and abetted this strife, profiting by the very process of disintegration.

## RELATION TO CROWN

But when these principalities had arrived at a treaty relationship with the Crown, they had come into a political position much more stable than a mere trading agreement with the Company. During the first part of the nineteenth century, the Company's functions were restricted in the political field and the authority of the Crown became progressively more important. Eventually, in 1858, after the Indian Mutiny, the Crown assumed direct political sovereign functions over all of the territory that the Company had acquired by annexation. This became British India. In the meantime, however, a large body of Princes within this area, and elsewhere in India, had regularized their relationship to the Crown as a protector rather than as a functioning sovereign. These treaties had been made relatively uniform as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, and there had been established through them a continuously accepted political relationship.

In these treaties the British Crown recognized the hereditary monarchical sovereignty in the various States of the ruling Princes and their houses. The Crown undertook to sustain that sovereignty through the instrument of protection. On the other hand the Princes, for their part, recognized the paramountcy of the Crown as the protector and the place of the King-Emperor as the Maharaja of Maharajahs.

As a part of this compact, the Princes assigned to the Crown the functions of external relationships, including defense. The Crown also undertook to exercise a supervisory character in respect to functions that affected the whole of India, such as coinage, currency, tariffs and, subsequently, communications.

The functions of the Crown were centered in the office of the Viceroy, whose cumbersome official title is usually conveniently shortened to "Crown Representative."

The domestic relationships of the Viceroy's office to the Princes were carried out through the Political Department of the Government of India. Working through this department, in turn, were the British Residents who had a place on the administrative staffs of the various Princes. Their function was to advise the royal house in each case as to the wishes of the paramount power.

In the case of the small States, it was advisable to group a number of them together as an "Agency" and to appoint a Representative of the Crown to act in an advisory capacity to the group as a whole.

In the early days of administration under this form, the British undertook to enforce a stipulation whereby, in the event that a Princely throne became vacant, the State would automatically revert to the Crown. This was successfully challenged under the treaty terms by the States themselves, and since that challenge the protected monarchical structure has been sustained. On the other hand, the Crown reserves to itself the right to declare that the actions of a given ruler are incompatible with his treaty relationships and thus to declare his throne vacant. This is actual deposition, and several Rajahs have been deposed in recent years for simple bad behavior.

#### THE PLACE OF TRADITION

Behind this straightforward legal treaty relationship is an enormous field of tradition, of local practice, of adaptation of the whole idea of government to the local mind. It was inevitable that in enhancing the position of the paramount power, the Crown should also enhance the position of the local ruler. A system of salutes was devised in which the importance of the local potentate was indicated by the number of guns to which he was entitled. There was actually, at one time, an entire office functioning under the Crown Representative whose purpose was to think up titles of honor to bestow on these native potentates. The existing titles of more than one Maharajah would occupy a typewritten page. Even the major titles may differ from State to State. Maharajah, or Great Ruler, is the most common, but Rajah is also widely used. The ruler of Hyderabad is called the Nizam. The ruler of Baroda is called the Gaekwer, or Protector. Some States are ruled by Nawabs. The head of Nawanagar is called the Jam Saheb, and it goes without saying that the favorite of all the Americans is the Assam Prince, known as the Bong of Wong, although he has a close second in the Wali of Swat.

Naturally the importance of these princely monarchs varies to a large extent with the size of the States that they rule. The size is likely to determine, to a large extent, the amount of revenue the Maharajah can command. Under the inherited pattern of government that was accepted in

India, all the products of the State accrued to and belonged to the Maharajah. The degree to which he collected his available revenue was the determining factor as to whether his rule was benign or severe. Most of the large princely families have long since accumulated a considerable volume of hereditary wealth. Many of them, by Western standards, are regarded as very rich men, indeed. One of the Indian rulers has so well invested his family's fortune that his relatively small State is not dependent upon its own revenue in the slightest, and so no tax is collected. The Nizam of Hyderabad is usually reputed to be the richest man in the world. A great many of the Maharajahs use money on a scale that is staggering to most Occidentals.

Among the more enlightened it has been the practice, in modern times, to set a fixed statutory limit on the amount of public funds that may accrue to the private purse of the ruling Prince. In one State the amount is fixed as low as 6 per cent. In several it is between ten and fifteen. Some of the States are poverty stricken. Some of them are highly productive and quite rich. There is obviously no uniformity of pattern in the economic and social field that can be applied to 562 different principalities.

The same thing is true of their political pattern. Some of the more advanced States have adopted all the forms of constitutional government. They have popular elections with a limited suffrage, the appointment of Ministers responsible to an assembly and the actual administration of executive functions through the office of a Prime Minister. In such States, of course, taxes are collected for the public funds and those funds are expended for public purposes. Probably the best of the States in this respect is Travancore, which has long been held up as a model State because of the distinction of its Prime Ministers and the character of its enlightened administration. Baroda and Bhopal are also far "advanced" from the Western point of view.

The enlightenment of the administration reflects also the character of the independent sovereign. Many of the Maharajahs have gone to the Occident and have received an education in British or French universities. They have absorbed Western ideas of behavior and have often, on their own initiative, introduced reforms that have made the lives of their subjects very considerably more pleasant. Some of them, within recent

years, have even offered to abdicate if such an action would further the cause of political growth in India.

This, however, is not the typical position of the Maharajahs as a whole. Their first concern, quite naturally, is with the perpetuation of their own sovereignty. They enjoy a hereditary position, guaranteed to them by the stipulation of treaties with the Crown. Many of them can point with justice to a record of very substantial loyalty to their obligations. Within limits, the Maharajahs are allowed, for example, to maintain their own armed forces within their borders. Both in 1914 and 1939 many of the Maharajahs put those forces at the disposal of the paramount power for the purpose of fighting the enemies of the King-Emperor. Some of the Maharajahs have served with great distinction as field commanders. The most outstanding of these was the late Maharajah of Bikaner who led troops in the field in both World Wars.

In addition, the Maharajahs have made very large contributions in money to the defense of the Empire. It is their accepted position, therefore, that they have, over a period of years, carried out loyally the terms of the obligations they have assumed in treaties with the Crown. The Crown, on the other hand, has undertaken, as a matter of general practice, to interfere as little as possible in the domestic affairs of any of the States. The British have maintained even more than the fiction of local sovereignty; they have given it a considerable body and fact by the substantial refusal to interfere except in cases where the good of the country was involved.

#### THE PROBLEM OF CHANGE

But now comes the problem of a change in constitutional structures for India as a whole. Right at the beginning of that problem is the inescapable fact that there is a monumental difference between the institutions of the States and the institutions of British India. The vast majority of the States, when all is said and done, are simply hereditary autocracies. In most of them the democratic processes are unheard of, and in some of them the Rajahs and the Residents insist that there would be popular indignation if anyone tampered with the rights of the ruling Princes. Some persons have suggested, indeed, that hereditary autocracy is a type of government that

the Indians readily understand, readily accept and cheerfully endure, even if they may not always enjoy it. This statement is probably exaggerated. It is extremely hazardous to say that persons would not believe in democratic institutions when they have had no opportunity to put them to the test of experience. The influence of the Crown on this point has, in most cases, been relatively negative. As far as the actual subjects of the Princes are concerned, the Crown is involved primarily only to prevent outrageous abuses. There has been no systematic attempt to build up the participation of the people as a whole in any of the functions of government, although many "reforms" have been suggested.

From our point of view, the States, as a whole, constitute an enormous political anachronism. There are hereditary thrones in India at the present time whose occupants claim an unbroken lineage from the eleventh or twelfth century, and in some of those cases it must be said that the social institutions of the States have not been substantially modified in those six, seven or eight hundred years.

Some of the Princes are definitely afraid of the rising tide of nationalism that is to be found all over Asia. Many of the major States, for example, have rigidly decreed that no political parties could be organized within their borders. Agents of parties in British India have been denied access to many of the States, sometimes they have been ejected, and sometimes they have been severely punished.

Over a period of years the Maharajahs themselves have not been interested in the slightest in the creation of an independent Indian union. On the face of it, such a development would be a threat to their own powers. Moreover, the more outspoken of the Indian nationalists have said that they regarded the whole institution of the Princely States as completely outmoded, and have frequently suggested that one of the major advantages to be derived from an independent India would be the gradual, or perhaps not so gradual, relegation of the whole structure of the Princely States to limbo.

#### RELATION TO RETENTION

Part of this attitude arises from the fact that Indian nationalists have felt that the continuation of the State-Crown relationship was a factor upon which the British depended to retain their rulership in India. Some

Britons have stated that quite clearly. As long as one hundred years ago one British commander declared quite enthusiastically that as long as Britain maintained the States the whole of India was secure to Britain. That is not the attitude of the British Government at the present time toward the States, but it undoubtedly has been the attitude, at different times in the past. So the nationalist sees, in the whole institution of the States, an enemy to progress and an enemy to independence.

The present position of the more enlightened of the Princes revolves, not around the continuation of their relationship to the Crown, but around the problem of guarantees of their ancient tenure. Very few, indeed, of the Princes are prepared completely to democratize their societies. Most of them propose that they and their descendants shall go on being ruling Princes in their hereditary domains. Nevertheless, they are not suggesting that the paramount power must continue indefinitely to be the British Crown. They are suggesting, however, that the British Crown cannot modify or abrogate its treaties with them until some other paramount power is set up to which they can willingly give allegiance. This position was clearly stated in the resolution of the Chamber of Princes adopted prior to the advent of the British mission to India in 1946. That resolution declared:

The Chamber of Princes desires to reiterate that the Indian States fully share the general desire in the country for immediate attainment by India of her full stature and will make every possible contribution towards settlement of the Indian constitutional problem.

In moving that resolution, the Nawab of Bhopal, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, declared:

What is true of the world today is equally true of this country of ours. It is unfortunately divided and weakened by our differences and disagreements, and it is to the spirit of justice, tolerance and co-operation that I look, to bring us to the goal which every thinking Indian, be he Prince or peasant, must long to reach. Is there one among us who does not wish to see this land of our birth free, great and respected, making its worthy contribution to the uplifting of humanity as it did in ages long ago? If that is how we feel then let us all determine to work for that great end. Let us all be prepared for mutual sacrifices. Let us try to remember that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

The Chancellor then made a declaration on behalf of the Princes, stating their position. In it he said (translated and abridged):

The object is to set up forthwith constitutions wherein the sovereign powers of the Ruler will be exercised through regular constitutional channels without in any way affecting or impairing the continuance of the reigning dynasty and the integrity of each State.

There shall be popular institutions with elected majorities to insure close and effective association of the people with the Government of the States. In framing the detailed constitutions of individual States regard shall be had to the special circumstances of each State.

Most States have already adopted statutory provisions guaranteeing the rule of law, and security and protection of person and property within their territories. Where this is not already done, certain essential rights should be guaranteed in the States, such as the right of liberty, habeas corpus, free expression, freedom of conscience and equality before law irrespective of religion, caste and creed. The States' courts shall have powers to redress infringement of these rights.

Administration shall be based on the following essential principles, which would be strictly enforced where they do not obtain at present:

Administration of justice must vest in an impartial competent Judiciary, independent of the Executive, and there must be suitable provision for impartial adjudication of disputes between individuals and the States.

The rulers should clearly demarcate administrative budgets from civil lists and fix the latter at a reasonable percentage of the ordinary revenue;

The incidence of taxation must be fair and equitable and a definite, substantial portion of the revenue must be allocated for the benefit of the people and particularly to the nation-building departments.

That there should be no misunderstanding or any inference that he was speaking for himself alone, the Nawab insisted:

This declaration, made spontaneously and earnestly, is inspired by faith in the peoples of the Indian States and in the future destiny of the States. It represents the will of the Rulers to implement these decisions without reservation or delay.

A month later, on the occasion of his fifty-second birthday, the Nawab reaffirmed this position. Prior to his going to New Delhi to meet the British mission, he addressed his own people in words that applied to the whole of India. He said:

It is time now for action. We have played too long with words and phrases. If we fail at this juncture responsibility for what may be our lot in years to come will rest on our heads.

To me it has brought a feeling of humiliation and shame to think that this great land of ours, which in the past has made its contribution to human thought and progress the world over, should continue under outside domina-



tion and control, and a servant and not a master in its own house. That feeling is heightened by the thought that we ourselves are primarily responsible for the continuance of controls and restraints imposed upon us by other hands than our own.

Our own conscience, however, cannot fail to lay the blame where it is really due and I must confess to a feeling of the deepest depression and unhappiness when I listen to demands so frequently heard which would place on a foreign country responsibility for composing our own domestic differences and imposing on us a settlement of our own domestic problems.

If we are in earnest in our demand for a free and independent India let us ourselves lay the foundation for that freedom and independence.

I stand for a free and independent India. No Indian worthy of his name would stand for anything less.

Sacrifices are needed. Let us all in a spirit of lofty patriotism, placing the good of the country before everything else, come together and make our mutual contribution to the task of building a new India on our own dreams, an India which will feel her proper place in the councils of the world and make, as in the days long ago, her contribution to the uplift of humanity and advance the spirit of true civilization.

Statements like this, coming in addition to the Prince's resolution, represent a very considerable change of front. Up to this time, the Princes have been extremely reluctant to participate directly in any federal union. The Act of 1935 provided that a federal union could come into existence at the center whenever 50 per cent of the Princes (judged on the basis of population in the States) should have acceded to the union. In the period prior to the outbreak of the war, the requisite number had not so acceded. From 1939 on, the British Government dropped its efforts to persuade the Princes to accede because of the pressure of the war. Indian nationalists assert that this constituted a change in the British policy and that the Government of India was quite willing to take advantage of the war situation to impede the progress toward federation.

#### NEED FOR CONSOLIDATION

Actually, there has been another problem no less difficult than the problem of federation itself. With 562 different political structures, the whole mechanism of the States is extremely unwieldy. For political purpose it is obviously necessary to consolidate and group many of these small and ineffective units. Under British administration this has been done through the formation of the States Agencies. If, however, the States are

to be represented in the federal union, some other means of combining small units into larger ones must be found. On some occasions in the past the British have attempted to do this by a minor form of coercion. It has proved to be quite unsuccessful, and even the most insignificant ruler has shown himself to be sensitively jealous of his hereditary prerogatives. Obviously, the small States cannot be successfully represented in any union unless their rulers are quite willing to trust the function of representation to other and larger bodies.

Thus a double problem has been posed. The States must be persuaded to accept a federal union as the paramount power, and the smaller States must be persuaded that consolidation within the State structures is the normal mode of representation and organization. This must take place, moreover, among independent rulers, many of whom do not like the idea of representation at all.

A further obstacle to the participation of the States in a federal union has been the fact that the concepts of government are totally different in many of the States from those that exist in British India. This problem became acute in the simple matter of the choice of representatives to sit in a Constituent Assembly. The War Cabinet Proposal of 1942 suggested that representatives in the Constituent Assembly, on behalf of the States, could be chosen by the ruling Princes. Political parties in British India objected vehemently to this proposal on the ground that a constitution-making body would then be composed, in part, of freely elected representatives of the Indian people and, in part, of officially-appointed representatives of hereditary monarchs. There is an obvious clash in point of view here. It is not to be expected that the vast majority of the States can or will set up machinery for popular elections at any time in the near future. Such a development in many of the States would constitute outright revolution and the monarchs look on revolution with a jaundiced eye. New forms, therefore, have to be devised and compromises reached that can prove mutually acceptable, both to the Princes and to the political leaders in British India.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF POWER

The position of the Princely States affords a further complication and a further controversial ground when it comes to the drafting of the consti-

tution. The largest single issue in the formation of an Indian union has been and will continue to be for a long time to come the distribution of power between the central government and the constituent units of any federation. The majority party in British India has favored, and will undoubtedly continue to favor, the creation of a central government that enjoys the largest number of residual or delegated powers that can be accorded to it and still obtain accession on the part of the constituent units. The numerical majority in British India is certain to be "federalist" in the strongest sense of the term. That is a natural and instinctive reaction. The case is not pled on these grounds. It is advanced, rather, on the basis that India can solve her overwhelmingly difficult problems only if there is a strong, stable, vigorous and powerful central government.

This means that the constituent units must delegate to government at the center a very substantial part of their sovereign powers. The Princely States, presumably, are to form an important part of those constituent units. But the whole character of the Princely States has been an assumption, under their treaty position, that all powers, except those very particular external function delegated by treaty to the Crown, were fully residual and vested solely in the local monarchs. The formation of a strong central government, therefore, means that the Princes would be obliged at the outset to divest themselves of authority to a degree that was never demanded in their relationship with the paramount power.

It is proposed that the Princes be represented in the federation and that the federation itself could assume the functions of paramountcy. But it is not to be supposed that the Princes, representing only one-fourth of the population, can obtain either an outright majority or even a numerical equality in the federation to be formed. Success of the federation depends upon the political skill and political organization of the major parties in British India. It is inconceivable that they would consent to a federal union in which British India, as a whole, occupied a position of inferiority to Indian India.

#### PLACE OF THE TREATIES

There is a further legal complication from the constitutional point of view. However much the Crown might wish to divest itself of its protecting function in respect to the States, it cannot carry out that course of

action under its existing compacts without the consent of the States themselves. The British take the constitutional position, just as we do, that a treaty owes its validity to mutuality of accepted obligations. His Majesty's Government is not prepared unilaterally to abrogate several hundred treaties. The modification of any treaty structure in favor of an Indian federation must necessarily be by consent. That consent will not be given by the Princely States, on the other hand, unless there is a substantial reservation in favor of their sovereign position.

This issue involves more than the nominal protection of minorities (which the Princely States unquestionably are). It involves the validity of a major body of treaty obligations to which the Crown has been committed over a long period of time. Those obligations may seem to the outsider to consist largely of advantages that may accrue to the Crown. This is not the view of the Indian Princes. The Indian Princes hold those treaties to be valid contracts, that can be modified only with their consent. This point of view would undoubtedly be accepted by the majority of British jurists who feel that now more than ever it is essential in the international field to sustain the validity of obligations that have been assumed. Indeed, it goes without saying that if His Majesty's Government undertook a coercive action and withdrew its treaty protection without consent, its action would be challenged by the selfsame persons who are most eager to see an independent India created. British retirement from her legal relationship to the States must be not merely orderly, it must also be lawful.

Emphasis is placed on this phase of the problem because of the fact that the political character of the Indian States arouses no great sympathy in the minds of politically progressive persons. There is not a great deal to be said on behalf of the Princely States as a form of government. They are definitely an impediment to India's progress. They are definitely vestigial organs that could well enough be amputated. But their structures exist by virtue of law. They cannot be wished out of existence simply because they are an anachronism. They cannot be disposed of by revolution without creating the very chaos that persons sympathetic to India are eager to avoid. They must, on the other hand, be modified through painstaking and perhaps painful compromises and changes operative over a considerable period. Those changes are not easy to accomplish when each one must be made through a direct relationship with an individual. This is

one of the reasons that a constitution for India cannot simply be decreed. It must be evolved.

#### BRITISH INDIA AND THE PROVINCES

The outstanding difference between the political history of Indian India and that of British India is this. In Indian India the whole function of government is in the hands of the Princes and they hope to preserve it with as few changes as possible. In British India, the whole history has been one of modification of political structures with increasing emphasis on the constant need for change and growth. As a result, during the last one hundred years, Indian India has been largely static. British India's experience in the last fifty years has been thoroughly dynamic. Political emphasis in British India has been placed, for a long period of time, on the necessity for change, improvement, adaptation and growth.

Actually the British attitude toward this process had begun to take shape even before British India came into existence as a political instrument. In the seventy-five years between the American Revolution and the Indian Mutiny, there was, in the United Kingdom, a growth in political ideas in respect to the whole problem of dependencies. This changing attitude in the United Kingdom was reflected in a consistently closer scrutiny of policies pursued in dependent areas. As a result, as long as 150 years ago, the practices of the East India Company began to come in for criticism in the United Kingdom. The Company's first Governor-General of all the territories acquired in India, Warren Hastings, was impeached in the House of Commons. In the first thirty years of the nineteenth century, the prerogatives of the East India Company were steadily reduced, and by 1833 the Company was directly responsible, politically, for all of its actions.

When the Indian Mutiny took place in 1857, the whole history of British-Indian relationships was thrown into sharp focus and there appeared to persons in the United Kingdom to be no possibility of good government for India unless the last remnants of the East India Company were disposed of altogether. So the administration of British India was taken over politically and formally by the British Crown. The actual Government of India, as an instrument of British Government, functioning directly under responsible British political institutions, is, therefore, less

than one hundred years old. It is customary, as a rule, to speak of Britain's 350 years in India, but actually only somewhat less than a hundred of those have been years of direct political authority.

That century in British India has been a period of enormous change. The first half of it, the period of 1860 to 1910, was very much slower in its modifications than was the second period. During that time the British organized their control of British India, modified some of the provincial boundaries, built the railways, set up the Indian Civil Service and established the functions of government. It was essentially colonial government. The first part of the period, directly following the Mutiny, was one of repressive measures, a period of uneasiness and suspicion. This was later modified in line with the avowed purpose of associating Indians with the government of their own country. The Indian Councils Act of 1861 provided the machinery whereby a very limited number of Indians could be associated with government in an advisory capacity. This was not a modification of political structures in any sense. All of the functions of administration were still directly reserved to British hands, although some Indians were appointed as "non-officials" to the central advisory council.

In 1909 there was evolved the first essential modification of the colonial status of British India.

The Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 undertook, for the first time, to extend suffrage to a limited number of Indians. For the first time, elected members were admitted to the advisory councils. One Indian was placed on the Viceroy's council of seven, and one Indian was placed on each of the advisory councils in the Provinces. In the Central Legislative Council provision was made for the election of twenty-seven Indians, while five Indian non-official members were appointed. The Morley-Minto Reforms were a recognition of the need for change in India and afforded machinery by which that change could be brought about.

The period of the first World War in India was a turbulent one. Nationalism had begun to take a considerably more crystallized form, and Indian assistance in the war effort threw a strong light upon the importance of the Indian dependency to the British Empire structure as a whole.

Out of this ferment of new ideas there arose two things: First, the proclamation of Dominion Status as the goal of British policy, and second,

the initiation of machinery by which a very much larger participation in administration could be enjoyed by Indians. These developments came into legal form with the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were embodied in an India Act that provided, first of all, for a Legislative Assembly at the center in which a majority was made up of elected Indians.

The Assembly was divided into two chambers. The Upper House was called the Council of State, and the Lower House was called the Legislative Assembly. In the former, the Indian Civil Service was represented by twenty members, of whom seventeen were Britons and three were Indians. The elected membership of the Council of State, however, was raised to thirty-four, of whom thirty-two were Indians. There were six non-official appointed members, five of them Indians. The Council of State, therefore, had sixty members, and two-thirds of them were Indians.

The Legislative Assembly was similarly made predominantly Indian. It had twenty-six members from the Civil Service, of whom twenty-one were British. There were 105 elected members, of whom ninety-seven were Indians. Thus there were 116 Indian members in the Lower House as opposed to twenty-nine Britons.

The functions of this legislature were sharply limited by the veto power of the Viceroy and by his authority to promulgate legislative action if the Assembly's approval was not forthcoming. Nevertheless, the Assembly became, from 1920 on, an important instrument for the expression of the strictly Indian point of view. It became, moreover, an elected and not a nominated body.

At the same time, Indian representation on the Viceroy's Executive Council was enlarged. Of its seven members, three were Indians. Thus the central executive came, at least nominally, to represent an agreement between the points of view of British and Indian executive officers.

It was in the Provinces, however, that the largest changes were made. First of all, the Provincial legislatures were made fully elective and thus completely Indianized. In addition, the Provincial governments were made up of two British Ministers, who were nominated, and three Indian Ministers chosen from the majority party in the legislature.

## TWO POLITICAL EXPERIMENTS

The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms undertook to put into practical shape two political experiments. There was an attempt to deal with the problem of communal differences in India by giving special representation both at the center and in the Provincial legislatures to designated groups. The electorate had been divided from the time of the Morley-Minto Reforms, and a specified number of seats in elected bodies was reserved for Muslims, Sikhs, Chambers of Commerce, Anglo-Indians, Christians, Untouchables and Europeans. Moreover, because of the feeling that it was necessary that some of these groups have extra representation, the allocation of seats was, in some cases, made on a basis more generous than their numerical place in the society. Thus, under this legislation, the principles of the special electorate and of weighted representation were continued and even broadened. This was the first of the experiments.

The second experiment was an attempt to divide functions in the Provincial governments. The actual executive Ministries were divided into two classes. Some powers, such as police and finance, were retained in the hands of the appointed British Ministers. Others, such as agriculture and education, were placed directly in the hands of Indian Ministers. The first group of functions was called the "reserved" powers, and the second group, the "transferred" powers. The whole system of Provincial administration, therefore, became a dyarchy.

The purpose of this experiment, viewed in its best light, was to give to Indian administrators direct experience in offices in which they could have the largest possible degree of contact with their constituencies. Viewed in a less favorable light, it was an attempt, on the part of the British, to make some concessions to Indian nationalism but to reserve to appointed officers all of the functions that had directly to do with the political security of the state. The first point of view was that usually expressed in London. The second point of view was that characteristically expressed in India.

Neither of these experiments was particularly successful. The divided electorate was held by nationalists to be a deliberate accentuation of community differences, rather than a mere safeguard of minority rights. In addition to the special electorates, there was the "general electorate" which



was dominated entirely by the majority, who were Hindus. The Hindus could support candidates in some of the special electorates other than the Muslim, but the minority groups felt that they had little opportunity for contest in the general electorates. The result was that the general electorate became, basically, a Hindu instrument, usually dominated by the Congress party, and the remaining electorates became the hallmark of the separate communities. There are many thoughtful Indians who believe that the division in the electorate was a political retrogression. They believe that it marked and divided classes and made them more conscious of their own identity. Carried to its extreme, this criticism becomes the charge that the British invented the instrument of the divided electorate with diabolic ingenuity so as to set one group against another.

It has been the Hindu position, in recent years, that the special electorate must be abolished altogether. The Hindus hold that they can represent Muslims, or vice versa, provided they go before the people on a basis of political representation and not of community division. The minority groups do not agree with this point of view, feeling that the special electorate is the only means by which their representative security can be assured.

The weighted representation phase of this legislation was also subjected to much criticism. The whole principal of weightage is that a group shall enjoy representation out of proportion to its numbers. Nevertheless, some of the minorities insisted that their weightage was inadequate while the majority insisted that it was out of all proportion to arithmetic or reason.

It was inevitable also, that once the idea of weightage was applied to legislative bodies, it would be expected to have its counterpart in appointments and patronage in executive bodies. Consequently the whole organization of the executive branch was subjected to continuous and critical scrutiny by each individual group to determine whether or not that group was receiving its "correct share."

These criticisms of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were well taken and they were serious. The legislation was far from utopian. What may possibly be overlooked, however, in examining its defects, is the fact that this body of law did really associate Indians with popular government to

a very much higher degree than at any time in India's five thousand years of recorded history. Good, bad or indifferent, the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms represented a monumental change in the approach to India's problems.

There was one other provision of this legislation that was also to have a profound effect on India's political life. It was stipulated that the political structures so set up were to be subject to examination and review at periods not less frequent than ten years, with a view to determining what further changes were desirable. It was under this provision that the Simon Commission was sent to India in 1929 to make the recommendations that subsequently led to the Round Table Conferences in the early Thirties. Out of those Round Table Conferences, in turn, came the next substantial change in the political organization of British India.

#### THE INDIA ACT OF 1935

This change was embodied in the India Act of 1935. That Act retained the divided electorates and weighted representation. But it did away with dyarchy. Under its provisions the eleven Provinces of British India became locally autonomous. Their legislatures became completely elective and Ministers derived from those legislatures took over all the functions of the executive branch. Provision was made, also, for the creation of a federal union at the center, but since this was dependent, as we have noted, upon the accession of a requisite number of the Princes, that part of the Act did not come into effect.

What was set up, however, was responsible, representative, political democracy in the eleven Provinces of British India. Veto powers were reserved to the Governor, but those veto powers were not exercised in practice. For two years, under the terms of this Act, the Indian Provinces functioned, in effect, as constitutional democracies.

All of this process embodied a considerable expansion in the place of the suffrage. With the exercise of the ballot there grew up those things that we associate with a functioning democracy. There were healthy working political parties, platforms, caucuses, election campaigns. Gradually the pattern of Western political organization appeared to be taking root in India. There was at least abundant opportunity for such a growth under the terms of the law.

But in the problem of constitutional change for all of India, these eleven Provinces naturally became the focal point for any projected federation. Unfortunately, however, while the Provinces are reasonably compact as political units, they are not necessarily well organized as ethnical or even geographical units. As parts of a federation they are sprawling, divided among themselves, noncontiguous and sometimes illogical.

The Government of India has hesitated to make sweeping changes with respect to Provincial boundaries, having had a disastrous experience in the attempt to partition Bengal early in the century.

#### ISLANDS WITHIN ISLANDS

Consequently the Provinces themselves present the problem of islands within islands and of divisions of language, religion, characteristic modes of behavior, social organization and customary law. In the Punjab, for example, the community of the Sikhs constitutes a compact and solid population bloc in the eastern part of the Province. The Province of Orissa is split up into a curious geographical pattern by the intrusion of a large number of small states in eastern India. The Province of Bombay is perforated with dozens of these little State Islands and is separated from Sind, on the northwest, and from the United Provinces, Central Provinces and the Punjab on the east and northeast and north by a wide variety of Princely State frontiers.

This problem became acute when it was proposed in 1942 that any "Province" might enjoy the right of non-accession to a federal union. Scrutiny of the proposal revealed that the Provinces, which were by no means natural and compact organic units, might represent a variety of differences within themselves.

British India is a reflection of gradual modes of growth rather than of artificial creation carefully designed to meet all the exigencies of every imaginable situation. Presumably the Provinces must be the essential units in a federation, but the Provinces, as they now stand, may not be logical units in a federation at all. Nevertheless, the redistricting of the whole of British India would be a task that Britain could face with nothing short of utter dismay.

The place of the Provinces as constituent units in a federation would also seem to presuppose a certain equality of position, but the Provinces

are by no means equal in size or importance. Bengal has a population of 60,000,000; Sind has less than 5,000,000. The North-West Frontier Province has less than 4,000,000.

Similarly there is, in some cases, no sharp conception of provincial loyalty as such that would make the Province an effective unit to which residual powers could be reserved. Only a few of the Provinces are really self-conscious as Provinces. There are certain qualifications, associated with the Bengali, for example, that would appear to mark him off as a special person. He is supposed to be volatile, emotional, articulate and somewhat unstable. The Madrassi, on the other hand, is usually believed to be calculating, competent and reserved. The Punjabi is regarded as proud, fearless, rather militant. Now none of these characteristics is a pattern for the people of the Provinces as a whole. They pertain to certain specified groups that have been developed in the various Provinces.

There is also some inter-provincial distinction on the basis of language, but actually, languages themselves do not correspond to provincial boundaries. Within the limits of Madras Province, for example, there are at least four major languages that are freely spoken. They are Tamil, Telegu, Kanarese and Malayalam. There are at least two major languages in Bombay Province. They are Marathi and Gudjerati. It might indeed be possible to redistrict India on the basis of prevailing languages. If that were done, however, there would be intensified the barriers of mutual unintelligibility. Language difficulty is large enough at present without intensifying it by political recognition.

#### THE PROVINCES AND UNITY

The reservation of powers on a Provincial unit basis would also run the risk of intensifying barriers between the Provincial units. Unless all the powers that pertain to trade, communications and normal intercourse between one group and another are reserved to the center, there is always the possibility that inter-provincial barriers would destroy some of the unity that India has achieved. We have had abundant experience with that situation in the United States where, in spite of the delegation of very large powers, both explicit and implied, to the Federal government, we still suffer under the confusion of our multiform marriage, divorce and citizenship laws, and still are faced in the field of trade with ridiculous

octroi imposed by State lines, by regulations on type of haulage, odd forms of taxation and by the peculiar quirks that arise from interstate rivalry.

Up to 1946 the interplay of Provincial rivalry, when it existed, was always subject to the overriding influence of the paramount power. At best, that power gave leadership and co-ordination. At worst it acted as umpire. It remains to be seen whether or not there can be delegated to a federation the degree of dignity and authority that would enable it to take the place of the paramount power in this respect.

Fortunately for India a large number of important levelers have been in operation for a considerable period of time. The most important one in the physical field is the network of railways, since this does not respect any local boundaries, Provincial or Princely State. Uniform currency is another extremely important common denominator for the whole of the country.

In a somewhat different field, one of the largest unifying agencies in recent years has been the Indian Army. Up to fifteen years ago the Army had a certain Provincial flavor. An overwhelmingly large part of its recruits was drawn from the Punjab. The change in warfare has modified this position and the Army now draws its resources from all over India. There are thousands of Indians who have discovered that when it comes to operations under fire, there is no essential difference in the qualifications of a Maratha, a Punjabi or a Madrassi.

The large political parties have also been, to some extent, an important agent in breaking down political barriers. The Congress party, for example, has moved its sessions from Province to Province and is undertaking to build up support in a variety of different communities organized on nonprovincial lines. The Muslim League has not been successful in this respect because it has confined most of its attempts to five Provinces in the north of India. Indeed, the influence of the League has been in the opposite direction through its creation of the term "Muslim Provinces." This, however, is part of the issue of Muslims versus Hindus and not the issue of Province versus Province.

#### RIGHT OF SECESSION

In the creation of a federated India, embracing as it must a variety of constituent units, the critical issue is certain to be, sooner or later, the

right of accession, nonaccession or secession that is vested in the Province or the Indian State. The War Cabinet proposals of 1942 definitely took a stand for the right of nonaccession for any substantial and identifiable group. It is quite possible that the motive for this phase of the proposals was the desire for emphasis on the fact that any union must be voluntary. The spirit of that proposal, however, can be applied to the major Indian States, which presumably could maintain an independent existence under separate treaty arrangements with the Crown.

To allow this principle to obtain is to create in India a league or confederation, rather than a federal government.

Indians have studied the history of the United States very closely on this point. They cannot help but observe that the first Colonial union, formed under the Articles of Confederation, failed in its purpose because of the lack of clearly delegated powers. Even when this problem was solved by the creation of a strong federal government under the Constitution, there remained still to be solved the bitter problem of the right of secession. It cost the United States a terrible civil war to establish the principle that federal union was indissoluble. The Indians, at this point, suggest that it is not unreasonable to point out that what we achieved at so high a cost must be important enough to be a problem of the first magnitude in India. What lies at the root of much of the Indian difficulty, in setting up the machinery for a federal union, is simply our old American problem of federalism versus States' rights raised to about the tenth power, because of the fact that there has been, thus far, no sufficiently large external pressure to create an automatic union.

The crux of the division at the present time is between politically identified religious groups. In the long run, however, the most serious stumbling block to a true and competent federal union may be the division between British India and Indian India. That division, unlike the artificial boundaries of the Provinces, and unlike the present overemphasized differences between the religious communities, is based upon a profound difference in political institutions. There is no precedent in history for the formation of a competent central government from a fusion of two groups of elements, one democratic, the other autocratic. Powers can be reserved to constituent elements, but effective central administration can presumably be achieved only if there is some degree of uniformity in po-

litical procedures and some common denominator in political outlook. That uniformity is not even in prospect at the present time. It is difficult to see how it can be brought into existence until there is a revolutionary change in the whole social and political structure of the Indian States. Whether or not the more politically advanced groups in British India will be able to display the necessary tolerance while these changes take place is not yet known. The Princes are fearful that such tolerance will not exist and consequently have insisted upon legal safeguards that go beyond the normal limits of effective union and federation.

A compromise has to be reached at this point, but how far this issue can be compromised without, at the same time compromising the authority of a central government out of working existence, remains to be seen.

---

## VII. ELEMENTS OF DIVISION

---

### 3. Hindus and Muslims

THESE VARIOUS DIFFERENCES THAT WE HAVE NOTED THUS FAR HAVE BEEN overshadowed in recent years by the one most acute division in India—the division between the Muslims and Hindus.

This division assumed progressively more importance as it became apparent that the steps toward self-government were being accelerated. Superficially it was a simple religious division and one that was readily understood. It had a counterpart, in a sense, in the widely-publicized religious division in Palestine, and so in general afforded to the outside observer a convenient and presumably self-explanatory approach to the obstacles to constitutional union in India.

Much of the observation on the division, however, has been oversimplified. It has often been presumed that the difference is solely one of religion and that if there were any reasonable degree of religious tolerance in the two communities the differences could be readily resolved. This does not correspond to the facts in the case. The religious difference between the two communities is important primarily because it serves as a mode of self-identification. The religious difference, as an almost insuperable barrier to constitutional progress, is essentially political rather than moral.

This is not, of course, to deny that there are vastly important religious differences, strictly as religious differences, between the two communities. The Hindu faith is essentially polytheistic and essentially static. The Muslim faith is monotheistic and is essentially kinetic. An individual is born a Hindu. An individual, especially if he is a Hindu, is converted to Islam. Except under the stress of the great revivals of religion, Brahmanism makes no attempt to proselytize. Islam, on the other hand, is essentially evangelistic.

There is, in addition, a deep-seated difference in concepts of origin in



the two faiths. Hinduism is a very old and an extremely intricate grouping together of modes of belief that have grown up under a wide variety of conditions. It is an all-inclusive type of faith that has given birth to dozens of offshoots, at least one of which, Buddhism, has become as important as the parent stock. Islam, on the other hand, is a relatively young faith and belongs specifically in the category of a "revealed" religion. It is exclusive rather than inclusive, rigidly doctrinaire and very vigorous.

The Hindu faith is prolix, decorative, ornate. The Muslim faith is severe, rigidly simple. Many of the various forms of Hinduism are completely anthropomorphic. India is full of literally millions of images of the gods and their multiplied avatars. The Muslims may not represent in any physical form any aspect of the Deity.

Hinduism is essentially an east Asiatic religion. It emphasizes some of the oldest beliefs of the human family. Islam is essentially a Mediterranean religion. It is not "Far Eastern" at all, and reflects many of the religious achievements of the Middle Eastern group, improperly called Semitic.

#### CODES AND BEHAVIOR

The code of ethics involved in the various forms of Hinduism is extremely elastic. It is an adaptation from a variety of sources. It reflects many, many influences other than religious belief. The code of ethics in the Muslim faith is rigid, concrete and written. The Hindu faith is, in a sense, an essentially negative one. It teaches the renunciation of worldly goods and worldly appetites as the highest good. Its religious goal is the loss of the identification of self in the essential godhead of the whole universe. The Muslim faith, on the other hand, is extremely positive. It identifies the individual in his exact personal relationship to God and provides an exact and precise system of punishment and reward after one human life only. The Hindu, in his faith, is at any given point at an insignificant stage in a very long and tortuous process by which he has come out of the substance of God and is eventually going back into the substance of God. The Muslim, at any given point in his faith, is in his one all-important human life, at the end of which he will be transported directly into a permanent paradise or into eternal damnation.

Those are sharp differences in basic belief. It is not unnatural that those differences would be reflected in monumental differences in modes of life.

The first of those great differences is the very high value that Hinduism places on asceticism. The renunciation of the world is the highest virtue. This not only accounts for the whole vast institution of religious mendicancy (there are literally several million professional, lifelong, permanent religious beggars in India who enjoy in that capacity a preferred position in society), it accounts also for the tremendous psychic hold that the religious mystic can obtain over the Indian people. It is the only possible explanation for the phenomenon of Gandhi. He is admired for his astuteness. He is venerated for his mystic asceticism.

This concept and this mode of behavior is foreign to the Muslim practice. The Muslim is enjoined by his religion to enjoy and use his life, not to repudiate it. Certain specific restrictions are put upon the mode of his enjoyment (he is forbidden to use spirits, for example) but he is led to believe that his life is, and should be, rich and good.

#### REFLECTION OF ORIGINS

The mode of life developed by Hindus, on the one hand, and Muslims on the other, reflects also the different origins of the two societies. The individual in the Hindu society goes back through his sacred literature to the spiritual glories of ancient India. He feels that his own culture is unique and that it reflects the best in life and thought that has been achieved in the whole world. The Muslim, similarly, goes back in his culture to Persian and Arabic origins for the most part, and is influenced by the dynamism of Islamic thought which is relatively modern.

The outward manifestation of this deep-seated cultural difference is a difference in behavior. The two communities live under two different groups of law. The basis for the religious organization of Hindu society is the code evolved largely from the Sutras prior to the Christian era. It is this body of law that determines, for the individual Hindu, what is permitted and what is not permitted. It dictates his rules of eating, of marrying and worshiping and of conducting himself in relation to other persons generally. The Muslim, on the other hand, is governed by a somewhat more specific and rather less intricate code, derived directly from the Koran. That body of Koranic law also tells the Muslim what he

can eat, with whom he can consort, what language he may use and how, in fact, he should conduct himself from the beginning of life to its end.

These two bodies of religious law are widely dissimilar at many points and out of them has grown up the wide dissimilarity, in some forms of simple behavior. The orthodox Hindu, for example, is a vegetarian. He is not only a vegetarian, he is a worshiper of the cow. The Muslim eats beef with enthusiasm but he is rigorously forbidden, by his religion, to eat pork. The Hindu lives in a confined area circumscribed by a number of very special taboos. He may cleanse his body, for example, only with running water. He performs his specific family ritual each day. The Muslim lives under a different series of taboos. He is forbidden to take interest on money that he lends.

The mode of worship between the two groups is completely different. The Hindu visits an ornate temple, from time to time bringing an offering to the god of his choice. The Muslim is enjoined to turn his face toward Mecca at specified times each day and prostrate himself in prayer. The Hindu worships with the accompaniment of music, sometimes dancing. The Muslim must worship in silence except for the monotone chant.

The operation of Koranic and Shastric law also has given rise to what was, in the beginning, a completely different attitude toward women in the two societies. In the Hindu faith the woman is an equal. In the Muslim faith the woman is a chattel. The seclusion of women, the institution of *Purdah*, is attributed by the Hindus entirely to Muslim influence. This is perhaps an exaggeration, because the keeping of women in separate quarters is a very old part of Hindu society. The veiling of women, however, is definitely Muslim in origin.

#### CASTE SOCIETY

The most striking difference between the two groups, as far as mode of life is concerned, is, however, the fact that Hindu society is a caste society. The Muslims do not recognize caste on a religious basis. Indeed, the Muslim faith goes to the opposite extreme. It teaches the spiritual singularity of God and the complete personalization of the individual's relationship to God. Out of that is derived, naturally, the thesis that all men are brothers and that they are religious equals. The only differentiation in such a society is that between believers and unbelievers. In actual

practice, of course, there have been occupational groupings among the Muslims that have had the general character of caste divisions, but these groups are not rigid and they do not derive their working authority from what is the real key to the Hindu caste system, that is, its insistence upon either endogamous or exogamous marriage within the caste structures.

Theoretically, at least, Muslim society is relatively simple. Hindu society is enormously complex.

Now the operation of the caste system sets up manifest taboos in the society. The basic difference in the two groups is that a Muslim can violate those taboos with impunity but the Hindu cannot. In practice, this means, for example, that a Muslim can marry a Hindu and still be just as good a Muslim as he ever was. An orthodox Hindu cannot marry out of his caste and still be an orthodox Hindu. The Muslim can entertain strangers and sit down and eat with them, provided that he does not violate his own food taboos. The orthodox Hindu cannot do so without having previously discarded some of the tenets of his faith. In a sense this makes the Muslim society, in spite of the more rigid definitions of its code, very considerably the more flexible of the two groups.

#### COMMUNAL RIOTS

Now in actual practice these religious differences, profound as they are, have less bearing on the relationship of Muslim to Hindu than would be supposed. In the main the two groups live together in reasonable peace. There are exceptions to this. There are what are called communal riots, from time to time. Those that arise out of strictly religious backgrounds, however, are less common than might be supposed. The causes of really sharp discord between the communities are likely to be the attitude toward the cow or the attitude toward prayer.

What has happened as a rule is this: The Muslim group may decide to celebrate a festival by the ceremonial slaughter of a particularly succulent bullock and may garland this beast with flowers and parade it through the streets to a public slaughtering ground. The Hindus may then take umbrage and fall on the Muslims when they return from their festivities. A few heads may be broken. Or conversely, at the precise moment at the sacred hour of prayer when the entire Muslim community is assembled at the mosque and is prostrating itself in religious fervor, there may pass

directly under the wall of this place of worship a Hindu procession in honor of some local deity, headed by seven oboe players who sound as if they were playing seven different tunes in seven different keys. This may be enough to rouse the worshipping Muslims to sally forth from the mosque and smite the irreverent unbelievers, hip and thigh. Actually these cases have been relatively rare when one considers the number of contacts that Muslims and Hindus must make every day all over India. As a rule it is only when other elements have been introduced—elements of political and economic rivalry for example, that clashes between the two groups have developed into really serious community struggles.

There is some degree of segregation in Indian cities. There are characteristically Muslim shops and characteristically Hindu shops, and there are, in many communities, well established ratios. Either one community or the other is in the very conspicuous minority and is forced to accept a minority position. In practice, whenever there has been something like an equitable balance between the two, there has been less friction on purely religious grounds than might be expected.

I have had in my own house and office in New Delhi, for example, at the same time, a Muslim major domo, a Christian cook, a Hindu *masalchi* (second boy), Hindu (Untouchable) sweepers, Hindu (caste) messengers, a Parsi bookkeeper, Gurkha guards and a Sikh chauffeur. There were no religious fights on the premises.

As far as I could discover there was a considerable degree of respect and tolerance in each group for the faith of the other. That tolerance has been largely implicit in the religious societies as a whole. The Hindus have made a practice of emphasizing the great degree of tolerance exercised by their greatest ruler, Asoka. And the Muslims themselves occasionally point with pride to the fact that Akbar the Great took his wives from different religious communities, built the proper chapels for each and actually undertook to set up, by law, a composite and completely tolerant religion.

For these reasons the concept of a civil war, as a strictly religious war, is far-fetched. The Muslims do not plan a Jihad for the purpose of exterminating the unbelievers because they are unbelievers. The Hindu, similarly, has no desire to wipe out the Muslim simply because the Muslim chooses to worship Allah instead of Brahma.

## SELF-IDENTIFICATION

The differences in mode of life, however, are sufficiently important and sufficiently clear that the Indian of either society automatically identifies himself as belonging to it. This is the determining factor in the religious difference. Regardless of whether or not it is sufficiently strong to make either group cohesive (and it probably is, as far as the Muslims are concerned), it is sufficiently strong to make each group permanently conscious of its own particular mode of life. No Muslim is part Muslim and part Hindu. No Hindu conceives of himself as belonging naturally to the Muslim community. Some very important Indians have set out very deliberately to cross the line between the two communities. They have insisted that their point of view must be, "I am an Indian first, and a Muslim or a Hindu, second." The Congress party, for example, which is conspicuously an organ of Hindu thought, has taken pains to place in high office persons who are Muslim by religion. The very emphasis that has been given to this practice in the case of these few isolated individuals is evidence in itself that the lack of religious identification is an achievement and not a commonplace.

There is also a prevailing economic difference between the two communities, considered as a whole, of which both groups are aware. It also is important in the political field since it underlies some of the Muslims' hesitancy in accepting a Hindu majority government.

Muslims, as a group, are definitely inferior economically to the Hindus. While the Muslims occupy some of the most fertile and productive land in the country, they are overshadowed in commerce, in industry and in capital. In the Punjab, for example, which is claimed as the homeland of the Muslims, and in which the Muslims have a slight numerical majority, non-Muslims actually pay 80 per cent of the income and urban property taxes. The large industries throughout India are controlled, for the most part, by non-Muslims. Cotton and jute are Hindu, and steel is Parsi. The largest banking structures in the country are Hindu and Parsi.

There is not much to choose in villages between the standards of one community or the other, but in urban life the Hindus belong in a higher economic classification, as a rule, than do the Muslims.

Some Muslims have accounted for this difference with the adroit ex-

planation that since the Koran forbids them to take interest they cannot compete successfully with the usurious Hindu money-lender. The explanation is a little too pat. There are deep-seated economic differences between the two communities that weight the scales in the favor of the Hindus. First of these is the fact that the Muslims were essentially the offshoots of a nomadic culture. They were wanderers and conquerors with no stable basis of wealth within their own community. More important is the fact that the converts to Islam in India were necessarily drawn from those ranks of Hindu society that had the least background in wealth and social organization. There are very few Muslims in India at the present time who are the actual lineal descendants of the original invaders. Most of India's Muslims are the descendants of Hindus who were converted to Islam at some point or other during the period of Muslim rule. Now naturally those converts would not be drawn from caste Hindus of any appreciable rank. They would have to come either from the lowest classes in the caste society or from the Untouchables. The background of the Muslim society, therefore, is considerably less blessed with wealth, privilege and prestige than that which obtains among the Hindus.

#### SOURCES OF WEALTH

In addition it should not be overlooked that caste organization itself is a compact controller of wealth. The caste domination of particular crafts and trades at given points may place in Hindu hands the co-operative control of sources of profit. The Muslim, on the other hand, in a casteless society, is an individual who achieves his economic position by his own efforts. It is not until the group is relatively highly developed that the individual has an economic cushion upon which he can fall back.

In actual practice the Muslims complain that when they are put to the test they simply cannot compete with the Hindus. They are, they say, speedily driven to the wall. There is, therefore, some differentiation between the two groups on basic, economic levels, and the Muslims are sensitive to it.

Whether accidentally or purposefully, this economic difference has been translated in modern times into an increasing divergence between the two communities. Partly because of the accidents of geography in relation to natural resources, and partly because of the economic power

of the non-Muslim communities the organized modern wealth of India is not in Muslim hands. The areas in which a Muslim population is predominant are chiefly agricultural. The major industries in the country are located in non-Muslim areas. The steel industry is in Bihar Province which is overwhelmingly Hindu. The largest of the cotton spinning establishments are in Bombay and in Ahmedabad, also non-Muslim. Of the major ports of the country, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Karachi, only the last is in Muslim hands. And while Karachi is important as a port, it has very poor possibilities of extensive growth. The largest part of its hinterland is made up of the Sind desert. It has required the development of the Indus Valley by irrigation, the drainage of northwest India by rail lines and the advent of air transportation to bring Karachi to its present significance.

Likewise the predominantly Muslim areas do not, in most cases, have compact human resources that make for powerful economic communities. Three of the northwest areas, Sind, Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province are underdeveloped and underpopulated. They do not have the massive resources of a Hindu Province such as the United Provinces. Similarly, Assam Province, in the extreme northeast, is rugged in its terrain, and while it has great potentialities, it is not yet the vital factor in India's total economy that its geographical position would seem to indicate. In only two Provinces, Bengal and the Punjab, does there appear to be the possibility of the development of a strong, vigorous, economic Muslim community, and in both cases the Muslims are far from holding an overwhelming preponderance in the population. They are just slightly over the half.

In India as a whole the developed sources of distributed wealth are low in proportion to the population. But in India as a whole the major contributions to wealth and the major means of developing and producing wealth (with the exception of the agricultural land in the western Punjab) are not in Muslim hands.

#### THE HERITAGE OF THE PAST

Nevertheless, the Muslims can look back on their history in India to a period of great domination. They were the great empire power. The last government by Indians that professed to control a substantial part of the



Indian peninsula was a Muslim government. The imperial lineage was Muslim. This community, outnumbered at least two to one, was the ruling community. These selfsame Muslims, now apprehensive because of their position of economic inferiority, are the descendants of those other Muslims who exacted tribute. It was the Muslim who gave orders. It was the Hindus who were the hewers of wood and drawers of water.

This consciousness must necessarily be a part of a psychological approach of the Muslim community to the problem of its political place in an Indian union. This factor has been admirably described by Sir Frederick Puckle, who was for many years a distinguished civil servant in the Punjab, and so became fully familiar with the Muslim thought processes. Writing in the April, 1946, issue of *Foreign Affairs*, concerning the Muslim attitude after the British had taken over control in India, Sir Frederick said:

Muslim peasants of course shared in the general improvement in conditions. But the Muslim upper and middle classes, in town or country, were in very different circumstances. For centuries they had been a ruling class . . . courtiers, soldiers, judges, administrators. The fortunate ones had commanded armies and ruled Provinces and stood at the right hand of kings and emperors. All had enjoyed in some measure the prerogatives and perquisites of rulers. All these material advantages of political ascendancy were now enjoyed by the British, and if there were Muslims who had the inclination to turn to other fields of activity and the qualifications required to make good in them, they found, as we have noted, Hindus already in full possession of trade, commerce and the professions. In addition to the decline in their material fortunes, Muslims had the mortification of playing second fiddle to the despised Hindus in political importance and in influence with the British rulers of India. This rankled perhaps more than anything else. The reversal of fortune was so crushing that the members of the Muslim community seemed stunned by it. Wrapping themselves in the fatalism of their creed, they sulked in the corner, watching apathetically and with impartial distaste their new rulers and their former subjects, infidels both and supplanters as well.

This apathy in a quarter of the inhabitants of the country could not last forever. But it was not until almost the last quarter of the nineteenth century that there were signs of a Muslim renaissance. For this revival the chief credit must go to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, a man of vision and a leader who, in spite of the opposition to the old school of conservatives, captured the imagination of the rising generation of Muslims. He had a threefold program: social reform within the framework of Islam, acceptance of Western education, and friendship with the British. The second item of the program was urgent. Muslims had turned their backs on the new learning which the West was offering to

India. They had clung to their old ways, small boys went on attending the school attached to the mosque where they learned the Koran by rote and little else, and their elders sat at the feet of Muslim divines hearing much talk "about it and about" and generally coming out at the same door as in they went. But the connection between education and power was becoming too obvious to be ignored. "When Hindu clerks were being promoted to posts in which they could give orders, when even policemen were chosen because they were good at their books, it was clearly wise for Muslims to reconsider their attitude to the new education." The foundation of the Muslim university at Aligarh in 1877 served notice to both British and Hindus that Muslims had done with sulking in their tents and were in the field again

---

MUSLIM POPULATION AND PROPORTION

	TOTAL POPULATION	MUSLIM POPULATION	PERCENTAGE
ALL INDIA	388,997,995	94,389,177	24
PROVINCES OF BRITISH INDIA	295,827,000	79,395,252	30
Ajmer-Merwara	584,000	89,899	15
Assam	10,205,000	3,442,479	33
Baluchistan	502,000	438,930	87
Bengal	60,314,000	33,005,434	53
Bihar	36,340,000	4,716,314	13
Bombay	20,858,000	1,920,368	9
Central Provinces and Berar	16,822,000	783,697	4
Delhi	1,086,000	319,701	29
Madras	49,342,000	3,896,452	6
North-West Frontier	3,038,000	2,788,797	91
Orissa	8,729,000	146,301	2
Punjab	28,419,000	16,217,242	57
Sind	4,537,000	3,208,325	73
United Provinces	55,021,000	8,416,308	15

MUSLIM POPULATION IN THE INDIAN STATES

TOTAL POPULATION	MUSLIM POPULATION	PERCENTAGE
92,973,000	14,990,925	16

---

It is against that background that the Muslims have approached the problem of their place in respect to an Indian union. It is a political problem and not a religious problem. It is political because the Muslims identify themselves as a special political group under the necessity of devising for themselves a special political place in the future of India.

THE PERMANENT MINORITY

Once the Muslims are self-identified as Muslims, they proceed automatically to the weighing of their position in the state as a whole. What

has usually been proposed as the pattern of self-government in India is some form of numerical democracy. The Muslims, quite naturally, have started counting. The results, even at first glance, are discouraging. The census of 1941 showed that there were, in the whole of India, 94,389,177 Muslims. Of those, just about 80,000,000 were in British India. By this time the figure undoubtedly has approached 100,000,000. There are about 400,000,000 persons in India as a whole. Not less than 250,000,000 out of this number are vigorously self-identified as Hindus. The Muslims have approached the problem of any union, therefore, with the precise knowledge that from the outset they are outnumbered by the opposite community at least two and one-half to one.

If they were not a self-identified community, this would be relatively unimportant. So long, however, as they feel that their accession to a union must be identified with their Muslim character, they place themselves in the position of permanent classified minority. It was to meet this feeling that the devices of weighted representation and special electorates were put into practice in the first place. But those devices were and are make-shifts. With the discussion of federation, the Muslims were faced with the fact that no electoral devices could turn a permanent minority of one-fourth of the population into a working majority. If India is to have union and numerical democracy, the Muslim position is unmistakably clear. The Muslims must either be a part of the permanent (and ineffective) opposition, or they must give up their self-identified character in a coalition in which they will not be dominant.

It is difficult for Americans to grasp the impact on the individual of the consciousness that he is in a permanent political minority. Our whole mode of government is based upon the assumption that the minority at any one period may become the majority at the next election. This very prospect of change is regarded as one of the most effective elements in our whole system of checks and balances. As far as our Federal Government is concerned, there is no large identified group that is permanently consigned to a situation in which it will automatically lose every election.

The situation of the Muslim who contemplates numerical democracy at the center and federal union is roughly that of an American Republican who at any time between 1932 and 1946 would have felt obliged to confess that there would never again be a Republican President of the United

States. That position would not be regarded as tolerable by more than fifty million Americans. And yet that is the position of the Indian Muslim if numerical democracy is to be the mode of federal organization. If he remains a Muslim and votes as a Muslim, and the Hindu remains a Hindu and votes as a Hindu, the Prime Minister and the President of India would always be Hindu and not Muslim.

It is the self-identification of the two groups that imposes the problem. The Congress party has attempted to avoid this self-identification by conspicuously asserting it is not Hindu. The Muslims simply do not believe that assertion. They believe that the inevitable organization of Indian political society will be along the lines of the religious communities. They believe, moreover, that this is precisely what the Hindus want. They expect, in short, that a federation designed along the projected lines will be essentially a Hindu-dominated federation to which they are expected to give unqualified support without having the means at hand to protect their own political position.

#### THEORIES OF THE CENTER

This numerical ratio between the two communities is a natural factor in producing two different theses as to what ought to go into the powers of any federation. Naturally the Hindus favor an end to separate electorates, although they do admit, occasionally and as a concession, that they would allow for some weightage of representation. They hold that Indians should be identified as Indians and should participate in the functions of government accordingly. There would, of course, be more Hindus to identify themselves as Indians than those of any other body, or indeed, of all other bodies put together. Their case for a numerical democracy is a perfectly obvious one. Even if they wished to continue to identify themselves as a religious community they would still be secure in their position as an overwhelming majority.

This sense of security leads, naturally, to the confidence in a strong centralized federal government. The Hindus believe not only that a successful Indian federation can be formed on the basis of numerical democracy, but also that to that federation there should be entrusted the powers and prerogatives of a strong, solid state. This also is a natural belief. The majority has no reason to fear the incursions of a strong gov-

ernment that it itself can set up, dominate or overthrow by virtue of its own voting strength.

The actual arguments that are advanced for this concept of a strong central government are not, of course, put in anything like such bald terms. On the contrary the Hindus point out that India is necessarily being forced to grapple with extremely difficult and complex social problems. A weak and divided government cannot meet such a test. Good government, from the Hindu point of view, must be strong government. This is a cogent argument and it gains additional weight from past experiences in the sacrifice of good working governmental conditions to the principle of self-determination. The Hindus say, in effect, that their philosophy of government does not allow for the Balkanizing of India.

The Muslim position, deriving from the consciousness of permanent numerical inferiority, goes to the opposite extreme. The one thing that the Muslim has been obliged to fear most is a strong central government because he would have no control over it. The Muslims have experimented over a period of twenty-five years with weighted representation, and they still declare that weightage has proved to be a completely inadequate safeguard of their own rights. They cannot hope for enough weightage in an independent union to give them a position of equality or majority at the center. Since that is the case, their only alternative, they hold, is to insist that power at the center be rigidly limited by the terms of the federation itself.

This was the political philosophy that was developing throughout the Muslim community from about 1905 on, and it was against the background of that political philosophy that an able Muslim leader, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, appeared on the scene with a new concept. He declared:

"One hundred million people do not constitute a minority . . . they constitute a nation."

And so the idea of the division of India—the creation of Pakistan—came into being.

#### RISE OF THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

The Muslim League began to take shape as a political party about 1905. Some Muslims assert that it was provoked into existence by the

increasing prominence of the already established Congress party. The Muslims, they declare, required a political make-weight to offset the growing political stature of the Hindu community. This is probably only one very small phase of the origin of the League. The first part of the century was a period of political change and growth among Muslims throughout the world, and the Indian movement appears to have been, in part, a reflection of currents of thought that were being set up elsewhere.

The early history of the League was uneventful and relatively unimportant. It did not gain a wide following quickly, and while it did afford an instrument for the expression of political ideas, it was by no means the dominant factor in the Muslim community.

With the extension of suffrage in 1920 and again in 1935, however, all political parties received a very considerable impetus. They were logical and necessary machinery through which participation in elections could be carried out. So the Muslim League gradually gained stature in the Muslim community. There were a number of rival organizations. Some Muslims joined the Congress party, particularly during the Caliphate movement in the early Twenties. The League, however, continued to hold its gatherings and conferences and was ready, as early as 1929, to make a serious bid for recognition as the dominant political institution in the Muslim community and to take to itself the position of official spokesman for the community.

It was in 1929, in fact, that the first mention of a separate Muslim state appears to have been made. At a party gathering in that year the most eminent of the Muslim poets, Sir Mohammed Iqbal, made an impassioned address in the course of which he declared that Muslims should work toward the creation of their own nation state in India.

This aspiration does not appear to have been taken seriously at the time. In 1931, the chairman of the Punjab Nationalist Muslim Conference, in an address in Lahore, declared:

The conception of a divided India, which Sir Mohammed Iqbal put forward recently in the course of his presidential utterance from the platform of the League, at a time when that body has virtually become extinct and ceased to represent free Islam—I am glad to be able to say that Sir Mohammed has since recanted it—must not therefore delude anybody into thinking that it is Islam's

conception of the India to be. Even if Dr. Sir Mohammed Iqbal had not recanted it as something which could not be put forward by any sane person, I should have emphatically and unhesitatingly repudiated it as something foreign to the genius and the spirit of the rising generation of Islam, and I really deem it a proud duty to affirm today that not only must there be no division of India into communal provinces but that both Islam and Hinduism must run coterminously with the boundaries of India and must not be cribbed, cabined and confined within any shorter bounds.

The idea of at least a separate Muslim federation, if not a nation-state, had, however, begun to take root. The term "Pakistan" was coined in 1933 by Choudhary Rahmat Ali, who explained that it was a symbol for the units that should make up the northwestern area. The *P* stood for Punjab, the *A* for the Afghan border States, the *K* for Kashmir, the *S* for Sind, and the *tan* for Baluchistan.

He circularized the London Round Table Conference with this proposal, but it was not seriously entertained. The name, however, stuck. The suffix "stan," meaning "land of" has now been applied to a number of different areas that have suggested an independent existence. In addition to the familiar "Hindustan," there have been, for example, demands for a "Khalistan," the land of the Sikhs, and even a "Dravidistan," a proposed independent area in the south of India.

The India Act of 1935 threw political differences into more sharp relief. The Muslim League contested the elections in most of the Provinces and won only three out of the eleven. In some of the others, coalition Ministries were set up and the Muslims, from 1937 on, had the experience in some Provinces of working as a political minority.

The relationships thus established were by no means uniformly happy. By 1939 the Muslim League had compiled an impressive list of grievances, charging political oppression by the Hindus. Some of these were exaggerated. Some had good foundation in fact. Naturally, political patronage was an important issue and the Muslims insisted that their proper share had been denied. They made a case, also, against the overbearing character of Hindu majorities.

A typical example, that really can be documented, was the situation that arose in the United Provinces. The Muslims were a very small minority, but because of the wealth and influence of some members of the community they had previously been represented on the Governor's

Council. Consequently they suggested that in the organization after the 1937 election, they would expect, as usual, to be so represented.

The Congress party, in response, invited such representation but made explicit terms upon which it could take place. Those terms were set forth, in writing, as from one party to the other. They read as follows:

The Moslem League group in the United Provinces Legislature shall cease to function as a separate group.

The existing members of the Moslem League Party in the United Provinces Assembly shall become part of the Congress Party, and will fully share with other members of the Party their privileges and obligation as members of the Congress Party. They will similarly be empowered to participate in the deliberations of the Party. They will likewise be subject to the control and discipline of the Congress Party in an equal measure with other members, and the decisions of the Congress Party as regards work in the legislature and general behaviour of its members shall be binding on them. All matters shall be decided by a majority vote of the Party; each individual member having one vote.

The policy laid down by the Congress Working Committee for their members in the legislatures, along with the instructions issued by the competent Congress bodies pertaining to their work in such legislatures, shall be faithfully carried out by all members of the Congress Party including these members. The Moslem League Parliamentary Board in the United Provinces will be dissolved, and no candidates will thereafter be set up by the said Board at any by-election. All members of the Party shall actively support any candidate that may be nominated by the Congress to fill up a vacancy occurring thereafter.

All members of the Congress Party shall abide by the rules of the Congress Party and offer their full and genuine co-operation with a view to promoting the interests and prestige of the Congress.

In the event of the Congress Party deciding on resignation from the Ministry or from the legislature the members of the above-mentioned group will also be bound by that decision.

The Muslims' reaction was violent. They characterized the Congress party position as a bald attempt to negotiate the Muslim League out of existence as a political party. The Muslims, likewise, pointed to their experience in this instance as an example of what they could expect whenever they attempted to work with a Hindu majority.

As an inevitable result there arose the demand for fully separated treatment of the Muslim community if any changes were to be made.

The outbreak of the war brought the demands for change, particularly from the Hindus, into very high relief, and the Muslim reaction was



sharp and bold. What was demanded was, in effect, a Muslim right of veto over any constitutional change. The League made a formal representation to this effect, declaring:

While the Muslim League stands for the freedom of India, the Committee further urge upon His Majesty's Government and ask for the assurance that no declaration regarding the question of constitutional advance for India should be made without the consent and approval of the All-India Muslim League nor any constitution be framed and finally adopted by His Majesty's Government and the British Parliament without such consent and approval.

In the meantime, Mr. Jinnah had come to a position of unchallenged leadership in the Muslim League. He made good capital out of the grievances, real or fancied, of the Muslim community. In the late Thirties, he had begun to talk more and more frequently about various possible forms of separation, emphasizing always the demand for the highest possible degree of autonomy for the Muslim-majority Provinces.

In January, 1940, Mr. Jinnah committed himself for the first time to the demand for a completely separate nation state for the Muslims. In a widely distributed magazine article, he declared

Western democracy is totally unsuited for India, and its imposition on India is a disease in the body politic. We (the Muslims) demand that a constitution must be evolved that recognizes the existence of two nations in India, both of which must share the governance of their common motherland.

From that point on, the Pakistan demand as the official party position of the Muslim League came rapidly into full form. The League met in convention in Lahore in March, 1940, and the separatist issue was its major item of business. After some debate the League adopted, on March 23, a resolution embodying the Pakistan demand. This declaration, subsequently known as the "Lahore Resolution," reads, in part, as follows:

Resolved, that it is the considered view of the Session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, *viz.*, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute "Independent States" in which the constituent unit shall be autonomous and sovereign.

That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in these units and in these regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them, and in other parts of India where the Mussalmans are in a minority, adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards, shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

This Session further authorizes the Working Committee to frame a scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matters as may be necessary.

It will be observed that this statement, while clear politically, was still somewhat indefinite on the geographical side. It was rather an expression of resistance to the proposals that had been made for a federation than it was a concrete plan for the partition of India. In this early period of the debates on Pakistan, there was no very clear definition of the area it was to embrace. The proposal was merely that areas "with a predominantly Muslim population" should be organized quite separately from the rest of India.

Nevertheless, the proposal had taken a sufficiently concrete political form that it could become the accepted position of the party as a party. Naturally the more frequently it was restated, the more importance it came to assume in the Muslim community.

#### THE PROBLEM OF PERSUASION

Mr. Jinnah had two problems on his hands. First, he had to win a sufficient amount of unqualified support for his party among all of India's Muslims that he could claim an outright mandate from the Muslims as a whole for the Pakistan idea. It was difficult to do this at this time because general elections were suspended during the war and the by-elections in which the Muslim League could participate were few and far between. The Muslim League, however, was victorious in a majority of these contests and did, during the wartime period, set up Muslim League governments in three of the Provinces, and Muslim League-dominated coalitions in two of the others.

The second problem that Mr. Jinnah faced was that of presenting the Muslim League position to the British as an indispensable prerequisite to

constitutional change. In the period prior to 1935 the Muslims had not been ardent advocates of independence for India. They felt that they were definitely dependent on the authority of British rule to preserve their own position and they had hesitated to suggest any drastic modification of that rule unless there were some prior guarantee of their own security. The proposals for federal union in 1935 were accepted by the Muslims, but with a great many mental reservations. The community was apprehensive and insisted that the safeguards written into law should be broad and clear.

With the proposals for outright self-government for India, the Muslim League was obliged to change its attitude on Indian independence, since it could not hope to compete with other nationalist groups unless independence were part of its program. The partition proposal afforded a way out of this dilemma. The Muslims could insist that they, no less than the Hindus, were committed to independence for Indians but that from their point of view, such a step meant the creation of an independent Muslim state and the creation of an independent Hindu state.

The Muslim League's position was influenced also by the attitude of the Muslims toward the war. The League was quite willing to give full support to the war effort. There was no thought of boycotting political institutions and there was no thought of impeding the progress of national defense. The Muslim community was represented in the Indian Army, somewhat out of proportion to its numbers, and had a tradition of militancy. The League, therefore, declared its unqualified support in the prosecution of the war.

This had an important bearing on the proposals of 1942. The League was quite willing to accept the immediate proposals dealing with the enhancement of the war effort, but was apprehensive about the long-term proposals. This was an entirely opposite position from that of the Congress party, which could agree in principle to the long-range idea, but objected strenuously to the immediate aspects of organizing for national defense.

Mr. Jinnah had stated the Muslim League's position in regard to these proposals in a cable that he directed to Prime Minister Winston Churchill, only five days before the proposals were adopted by the War Cabinet. In that message he said:

The Muslim League party in the Central Legislature views with grave alarm and apprehension reports that His Majesty's Government and the British Parliament may be stampeded into making a pronouncement or adopting an interim scheme within the framework of the present Constitution or the future regarding constitutional changes and impresses upon His Majesty's Government through you that no declaration should be made which will prejudice or militate in any way against the Muslim demand for Pakistan as the only solution of India's future constitutional problem

It is doubtful if this message was responsible for the much-debated clause in the proposals that allowed to any Province the right of non-accession. It is likely that this judgment had already been reached by the Cabinet. Also, in the subsequent discussions in New Delhi, there was no large-scale debate as to whether or not Muslim demands had been met.

The Cripps Mission held its chief discussions with the Congress party first, since that was the major stumbling block to any political change. After the Congress party had rejected the proposals the Muslim League followed suit, and on quite different grounds. The Muslim League stated that it could not accept any proposal for political change in India unless there were an agreement in advance to the principle of Indian division.

#### COMPROMISE PROPOSALS

By this time it was apparent that the idea of partition would be a major obstacle to any constitutional change, and so efforts were made to bring the two parties together on some sort of compromise basis. In the spring of 1942, Mr. Rajagopalicharia, former Premier of Madras, proposed a compromise under which the Congress party would recognize the validity of the Pakistan idea in principle, and then proceed from that to negotiations with the Muslim League to find the common ground. Rajagopalicharia's proposal was unacceptable to the now dominant Gandhi wing of the Congress party, and Rajagopalicharia was temporarily dropped from the Congress party's Working Committee. The Indian press referred at the time to his having been "read out of the party." He toured extensively in India, speaking on behalf of his compromise proposal in 1942 and, of course, in so doing dissociated himself completely from the Congress party's "Quit India" program that was developing at that time.

Rajagopalicharia had as much independent political stature as any man in India. He had had a long, distinguished career, and in the entire period

of his public service, there was at no time any challenge whatsoever to his integrity. Few men in public life in India have been more profoundly respected. His word, therefore, carried great weight. His proposals were obviously sincere, obviously patriotic, and obviously thoughtful.

What he proposed, in short, was that if the right of non-accession were readily accorded to the Muslims, there would be no occasion for them to wish not to accede. It was a psychological proposition, primarily. He used with some effect a simile that Sir Stafford Cripps had given in one of his press conferences, in which the agreement to federate was described as like a meeting within a room; if a door were locked one might wish to escape. If it were open, he would be content to remain.

The Muslim League's reaction to this proposal was one of pained tolerance. Mr. Jinnah was willing to meet with Rajagopalacharia, but he was also insistent that the recognition of Pakistan had to go beyond principle and into practice. Furthermore, he pointed out that Rajagopalacharia would not have the support of the Congress party and that, obviously, the Muslim League could not accept, as a solution, a proposal that was not made by the substantial body of Hindu political thought.

Then came the period of the riots and the arrest of the Congress party leaders. For two years the Muslim League had a clear field, and made use of it. Consequently there was less discussion of compromising the issues and more attention was paid by the League to consolidating its own Provincial position. By 1944 it had become clear that no constitutional change could be made until the Congress party and the Muslim League were brought together on a common ground. Consequently, while Gandhi was still in detention the first steps were taken to bring Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah together in a series of discussions of the Pakistan idea. Gandhi was eventually released to take part in these discussions.

#### FAILURE OF A CONFERENCE

By this time Gandhi had adopted at least some of Rajagopalacharia's ideas. He said that as a basis for the discussions he was quite willing to concede Pakistan in principle. He made six stipulations, however, two of which were to prove insurmountable obstacles. In one, he declared that he could not consent to any proposal for partition that required the involuntary movement of any part of the population, Muslim or Hindu. In

the other, he insisted that any agreement to partition, in principle or practice, had to be contingent on a prior transfer of sovereignty from British to Indian hands.

The British, at that time, had made it plain that they would not contemplate any transfer of sovereignty until the Hindu-Muslim conflict was compromised. They urged the compromise so that such a transfer could be made. Moreover, the war was at its height and the position of no change in sovereignty during hostilities had not been modified. It must have been perfectly obvious to Gandhi that one of the conditions he set forth as a prerequisite to an agreement with Jinnah would never be met. The other, the objection to involuntary transfers, made it inevitable that the Pakistan scheme would continue to be vulnerable on the ground of its creating still further minorities within minorities.

After a number of delays and postponements the Jinnah-Gandhi conversations were finally held and, as had been expected, nothing came of them. Gandhi stated that he had made as many concessions as he could, in conscience, and Mr. Jinnah stated that concrete acceptance of the Pakistan idea had not come from the Hindu group.

#### THE GANDHI-JINNAH LETTERS

The nature and extent of their differences can be seen in their final exchange of letters.

Gandhi's letter of September 24, 1944:

DEAR QAID-I-AZAM,

I have your two letters of 23rd September in reply to my letters of 22nd and 23rd.

With your assistance, I am exploring the possibilities of reaching an agreement so that the claim embodied in the Muslim League resolution of Lahore may be reasonably satisfied. You must therefore have no apprehensions that the August resolution will stand in the way of our reaching an agreement. The resolution dealt with the question of India as against Britain and it cannot stand in the way of our settlement.

I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations but as one family consisting of many members of whom the Muslims living in the North West zones, i.e., Baluchistan, Sindh, North West Frontier Province and that part of Punjab where they are in absolute majority over all the other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India.

Differing from you on the general basis I can yet recommend to the Congress

and the country the acceptance of the claim for separation contained in the Muslim League Resolution of Lahore of 1940 on my basis and on the following terms:—

The areas should be demarcated by a Commission approved by the Congress and the League. The wishes of the inhabitants of the areas demarcated should be ascertained through the votes of the adult population of the areas or through some equivalent method.

If the vote is in favour of separation it shall be agreed that these areas shall form a separate state as soon as possible after India is free from foreign domination and can therefore be constituted into two sovereign Independent States. There shall be a treaty of separation which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of foreign affairs, defense, internal communications, customs, commerce and the like, which must necessarily continue to be the matters of common interest between the contracting parties.

The treaty shall also contain terms for safeguarding the rights of minorities in the two states.

Immediately on the acceptance of this agreement by the Congress and the League the two shall decide upon a common course of action for the attainment of independence of India

The League will however be free to remain out of any direct action to which the Congress may resort and in which the League may not be willing to participate.

If you do not agree to these terms could you let me know in precise terms what you would have me to accept in terms of the Lahore Resolution and bind myself to recommend to the Congress? If you could kindly do this, I shall be able to see apart from the difference in approach what definite terms I can agree to. In your letter of 23rd September you refer to "the basis and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore Resolution" and ask me to accept them. Surely this is unnecessary when as I feel I have accepted the concrete consequence that should follow from such acceptance.

Yours sincerely,  
M. K. GANDHI

Mr. Jinnah's letter of September 25, 1944:

DEAR MR. GANDHI:

I am in receipt of your letter of September 24th, and I thank you for it. You have already rejected the basis and fundamental principles of the Lahore Resolution.

- (1) You do not accept that the Mussalmans of India are a nation.
- (2) You do not accept that the Mussalmans have an inherent right of self-determination.
- (3) You do not accept that they alone are entitled to exercise this right of theirs for self-determination.
- (4) You do not accept that Pakistan is composed of two zones, North-West and North-East, comprising six provinces, namely Sindh, Baluchistan, North-

West Frontier Province, the Punjab, Bengal and Assam, subject to territorial adjustments that may be agreed upon, as indicated in the Lahore Resolution. The matter of demarcating and defining the territories can be taken up after the fundamentals above mentioned are accepted, and for that purpose machinery may be set up by agreement.

You do not accept the provisions embodied in the Lahore Resolution for safeguarding the minorities, and yet in your letter under reply you say: "With your assistance, I am exploring the possibilities of reaching an agreement so that the claim embodied in the Muslim League Resolution of Lahore may be reasonably satisfied," and proceed to say "you must therefore have no apprehensions that the August Resolution will stand in the way of our reaching an agreement."

I have already clearly explained to you that the August resolution, so long as it stands, is a bar, for it is fundamentally opposed to the Lahore Resolution. You then proceed to say "that resolution dealt with the question of India as against Britain and it cannot stand in the way of our settlement." I am not at present concerned with Britain, but the August Resolution, as I have already stated, is against the ideals and demands of the Muslim League. Further, there is the resolution of Jagat Narayan Lal, passed by the All-India Congress Committee in May 1942 at Allahabad, which, in express terms, lays down as follows:

"The A.I.C.C. is of opinion that any proposal to disintegrate India by giving liberty to any component state or territorial unit to secede from the Indian Union or Federation will be highly detrimental to the best interests of the people of the different states and provinces and the country as a whole and the Congress, therefore, cannot agree to any such proposal."

These two resolutions, so long as they stand, are a complete bar to any settlement on the basis of the division of India as Pakistan and Hindustan. It is open to the Congress to revise and modify them, but you are only speaking in your individual capacity, and even in that capacity you are holding fast to the August Resolution and you have given no indication of your attitude regarding Jagat Narayan Lal's resolution. I have repeatedly made it clear after we had discussed the Gandhi-Rajaji formula, as you maintained that, to use your own language, "Rajaji not only has not put the Lahore Resolution out of shape and mutilated it but has given it substance and form," and proceeded to say "Indeed in view of your dislike of the Rajaji formula, I have, at any rate for the moment, put it out of my mind and I am now concentrating on the Lahore Resolution in the hope of finding a ground for mutual agreement." When I asked for further clarification which you furnished me by your letter of September 15th, you started by saying "I have shunted the Rajaji formula and with your assistance I am applying my mind very seriously to the famous Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League," and thence forward the Gandhi-Rajaji formula was not discussed any further, and the question of your representative character and authority, which I had pointed out from the very commencement, therefore did not arise, as you had given me the task of converting you to the fundamentals of the Lahore Resolution, and ever since we discussed the Lahore Resolution only at great length and examined the pros and cons, and finally you have rejected



it. As a result of our correspondence and discussions I find that the question of the division of India as Pakistan and Hindustan is only on your lips and it does not come from your heart, and suddenly at the eleventh hour you put forward a new suggestion, consisting only of two sentences by your letter of September 22nd, saying, "I have therefore suggested a way out. Let it be a partition as between two brothers if a division there must be." I naturally asked you what this new suggestion of yours meant and wanted you to give me rough outlines of this new idea of yours as to how and when the division is to take place and in what way it is different from the division envisaged in the Lahore Resolution, and now you have been good enough to give me your amplification, in your letter of September 24th under reply, in which you say: "Differing from you on the general basis I can yet recommend to the Congress and the country the acceptance of the claim for separation contained in the Muslim League Resolution of Lahore 1940 on my basis and on the following terms." The terms clearly indicate that your basis is in vital conflict with and is opposed to the fundamental basis and principles of the Lahore Resolution. Now let me take your main terms:—

(a) "I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations but as one family consisting of many members of whom the Muslims living in the North West zones, i.e., Baluchistan, Sindh, North-West Frontier Province and that part of the Punjab where they are in absolute majority over all the other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India." If this term were accepted and given effect to, the present boundaries of these provinces would be maimed and mutilated beyond redemption and leave us only with the husk, and it is opposed to the Lahore Resolution.

(b) That even in these mutilated areas so defined, the right of self-determination will not be exercised by the Muslims but by the inhabitants of those areas so demarcated. This again is opposed to the fundamentals of the Lahore Resolution.

(c) That if the vote is in favour of separation they shall be allowed to form a separate state as soon as possible after India is free from foreign dominations, whereas we propose that we should come to a complete settlement of our own immediately, and by our united front and efforts do everything in our power to secure the freedom and independence of the peoples of India on the basis of Pakistan and Hindustan.

(d) Next you say "There shall be a treaty of separation which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of foreign affairs, defense, internal communications, customs, commerce and the like which must necessarily continue to be matters of common interests between the contracting parties." If these vital matters are to be administered by some central authority, you do not indicate what sort of authority or machinery will be set up to administer these matters and how and to whom again that authority will be responsible. According to the Lahore Resolution, as I have already explained to you, all these matters, which are the lifeblood of any state, cannot be delegated to any central authority or government. The matter of security of the two states and

the natural and mutual obligations that may arise out of physical contiguity will be for the constitution-making body of Pakistan and that of Hindustan, or other party concerned, to deal with on the footing of their being two independent states. As regards the safeguarding of the rights of minorities, I have already explained that this question of safeguarding the minorities is fully stated in the Lahore Resolution.

You will therefore see that the entire basis of your new proposal is fundamentally opposed to the Lahore Resolution, and as I have already pointed out to you both in the correspondence and in our discussions, it is very difficult for me to entertain counterproposals and negotiate and reach any agreement or settlement with you as an individual unless they come from you in your representative capacity. That was the same difficulty with regard to the Gandhi-Rajaji formula, and I made it clear to you at the very outset, but the formula was discussed as you asserted that it had met the Lahore Resolution in substance, but while you were furnishing me with the clarification of this formula, you shunted it and we confined ourselves to the Lahore Resolution, and hence the question of your representative capacity did not arise regarding this formula. But now you have in your letter of September 24th made a new proposal of your own on your own basis, and the same difficulties present themselves to me as before, and it is difficult to deal with it any further unless it comes from you in your representative capacity.

I cannot agree with you when you finally wind up saying "In your letter of 23rd September you refer to the basis and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore Resolution and ask me to accept them. Surely this is unnecessary when as I feel I have accepted the concrete consequence that should follow from such acceptance." This is obviously far from correct. Why not then accept the fundamentals of the Lahore Resolution and proceed to settle the details?

Yours sincerely,

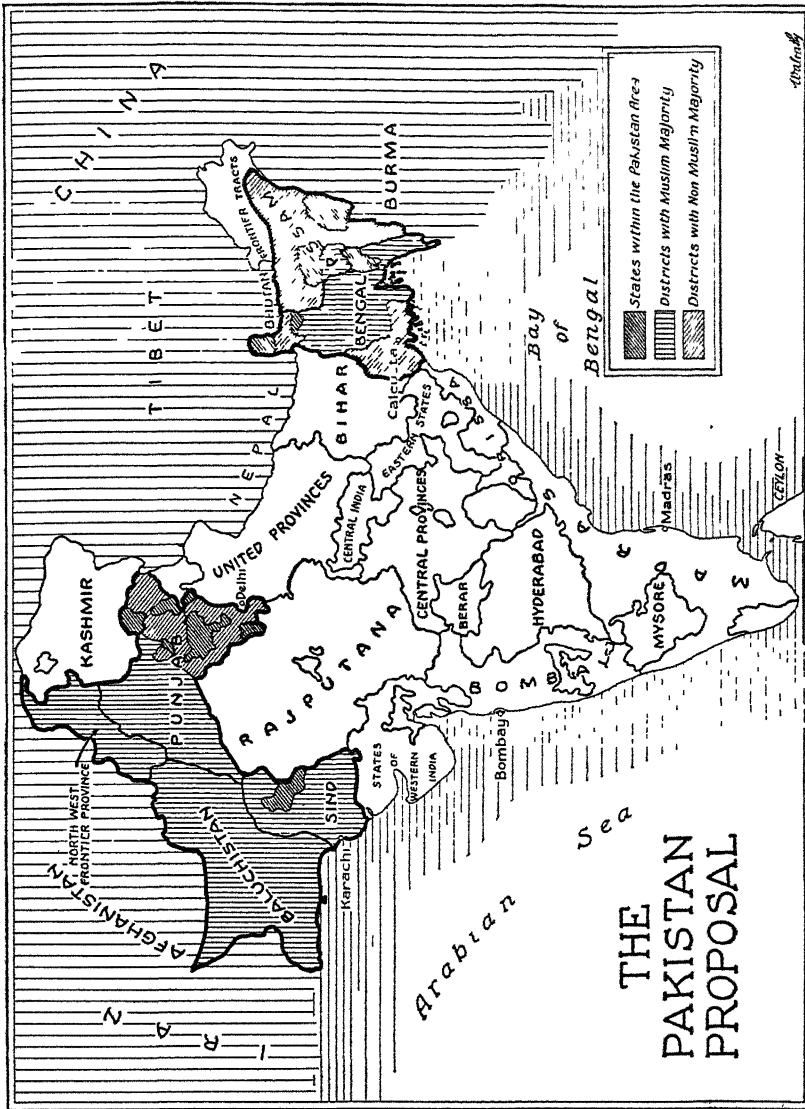
M. A. JINNAH

Thus the Hindu-Muslim stalemate persisted. No real meeting of minds had been reached.

One clear result of the conferences, however, was a definition of the exact geographic limits that the Muslim League proposed for Pakistan. Mr. Jinnah laid claim to five Provinces—Bengal, Assam, Punjab, Sind and the North-West Frontier Province—and to the administrative district of Baluchistan.

This claim made it possible to put the discussion of Pakistan on a much more practical basis, since after those conversations it was possible to analyze the exact limits of the proposed state and to get some idea, at least, of what the Muslim League proposed to include.

In June of 1945 the issue of Muslim participation in a reorganized cen-



tral government was brought sharply to a head by the proposals of the Viceroy, Lord Wavell. Lord Wavell called together the leaders of the political parties in a conference at Simla with the suggestion that he was prepared to reorganize his Executive Council in such a way as to include representatives nominated directly by the major political parties. This was an attempt to set up a higher degree of responsibility at the center. It was also an attempt to bring the Congress party and the Muslim League together on a common ground of executive responsibility, and thus to compromise some of the differences between the two.

After several days of discussion, the Congress party agreed to submit its list of persons acceptable for nomination to the Viceroy's Council. At that point the Muslim League withdrew and refused to submit its own list, again standing on the position that the partition of India was an essential prerequisite to any governmental change.

#### ELECTIONS TO ASSEMBLY

The next opportunity for a show of strength on the part of the League came in the elections to the General Assembly, held late in 1945. Here, for the first time, was the opportunity for the Muslim League to demonstrate how fully it could speak for the entire Muslim community.

There are 142 seats in the Assembly. Forty of these are filled by appointment, leaving 102 to be subject to elections. These seats are classified according to the character of the constituency to be represented with the special reservation of given numbers to the various communities.

In the "General Constituencies," for example, there are forty-eight seats for non-Muslims, divided into urban, rural and combined constituencies. Thirty seats are reserved for Muslims, again divided into urban, rural and combined. There are two seats for Sikhs, eight for Europeans and three for special areas such as Delhi, Ajmer-Merwara and the North-West Frontier Province. Eleven seats come under the classification of "Special Constituencies," with seven reserved for "landholders," and four for "Indian Commerce."

In the election the Congress party did not confine itself to the non-Muslim seats in the "General Constituencies." It put candidates into the contest for two Sikh seats, two Muslim rural seats, three landholders' seats, and three Indian Commerce seats. It returned twenty-eight candidates

unopposed, lost six contests, and came up with fifty-six members in the new Assembly.

The Muslim League, on the other hand, confined itself strictly to the thirty seats reserved for Muslims. It was obviously Mr. Jinnah's purpose, not to gain as many seats as possible in the Assembly, but to show that as far as the Muslims were concerned, the Muslim League only must be recognized as their spokesman.

Eight of the League's candidates were returned unopposed. That left twenty-two contests and the Muslim League won all of them. The Congress party was defeated in two contests for rural Muslim seats. The Nationalist Muslims afforded the largest opposition, contesting in thirteen constituencies. They were defeated in every one. The Khaksars, an agricultural party, contested one seat with the League and lost it. Six independents ran against the League. None was successful. In those twenty-two contested constituencies the Muslim League polled 86.6 per cent of the total vote.

There could be, thereafter, no further question of Mr. Jinnah's supremacy in the strictly Muslim areas. He was able to go into the opening session as an undisputed leader. He had his mandate. At that opening session, the Viceroy addressed the members. The Congress party, as a traditional gesture, boycotted the session, and so it was left to Mr. Jinnah to make the response to the Viceroy's address. The Viceroy made a remarkable appeal to the various Indian parties to compose their differences and work for the common good. It was a conciliatory address, hopeful and friendly. Lord Wavell said, in part:

I have not come here to make any novel or striking political announcement, but simply to meet the newly-chosen political representatives of India and to speak a few words of welcome and encouragement.

The intentions of His Majesty's Government have, I think, been made sufficiently clear. They have the determination to establish a new Executive Council formed from political leaders; and to bring about a constitution-making body or convention as soon as possible. I cannot enter into any details at the moment of the methods by which these bodies will be formed, and how the difficulties whereof we are fully conscious will be surmounted. Nor do I think it wise to try to set a date or dates for steps to India's freedom. I can only assure you that they have a priority label both in Delhi and Whitehall. I ask you for your co-operation and goodwill in our great task.

In this session you have already debated on adjournment motions some of the

pressing questions of the day. Proposals for legislation will be put before you by Government spokesmen. These include some important measures which are the result of the most careful deliberation; and which, I think, will, if passed by the Legislature, advance the credit and welfare of India. I do not speak with any intention of influencing your votes. It may be that you will think it right, some of you, to vote against Government on almost every issue and inflict the maximum number of defeats. If you believe this is your political duty I have nothing to say; I may think it will be a short-sighted policy to prevent or delay legislation that is likely to be of real benefit to India; but that is for you to decide. I do claim, however, that you should not in the course of debates in this House during this session say anything which may reduce the chances of my forming a political Executive Council, affect adversely the prospect of settlement on the main constitutional issues or increase the bitterness already abroad in the country. Enough and more than enough animosity has been caused during the elections to the Central Assembly; and the provincial elections are likely to have the same effect. It would be a great help to me, and I think to the leaders of your parties, if moderation could be studied in all speeches here during this session.

I hope and believe that the period of destructive work in the Assembly is near its end. If I am successful in forming a new Executive Council with the support of the principal parties, you will have a very great deal of most important constructive work to put in at your next session. Legislation by ordinance is not at all to my taste; and I very much hope you will then relieve me of the necessity to use my powers, even though it may involve long sittings to get through all the proposals put before you.

I think the Parliamentary Delegation have received very general welcome to India and that they have impressed those who have met them with their earnestness and sincerity and of the general desire of Great Britain to achieve a lasting and peaceful settlement. I am sure that they have made it quite clear that their purpose is not to delay the program of His Majesty's Government, but to inform themselves, and thus their parties, of the present conditions and opinions in India.

At the moment all our minds are inevitably concentrated on great political issues shortly to be decided. Some of you may alternate between ardent hopes and chilling fears. I for my part am firmly optimistic, believing in the old and homely proverb: "Where there's a will there's a way."

But while the political issues are being discussed, the administration of India has to go on, people have to be fed, clothed and housed in the best way that our resources may permit, law and order have to be maintained, plans for development must be prepared, vital decisions affecting India's whole economic future have to be taken. My much maligned colleagues have served India well, and have had her true interests at heart; I believe any new government will likely adopt many of their ideas. They are all, without exception, ready and willing to hand over their responsibilities at the earliest moment to their successors to whom they wish good fortune and Godspeed in their difficult but vital task.

It only remains for me to give you my good wishes for your work in this momentous Assembly. On you rests the great responsibility for the freedom and greatness of India. I would say this to you in conclusion, and say it with all the conviction at my command. that in all great constitutional changes, success has been achieved only by a spirit of mutual understanding and concession between the parties concerned.

It was because of the character of this address that Mr. Jinnah's reply came as a shock, not only to the Government, but to the whole world, since it abruptly brushed aside the whole basis of conciliation of which the Viceroy had spoken. Mr. Jinnah retorted with an open threat of civil war. He declared that the only constitutional issue of consequence confronting India was the issue of partition. Unless the British and the Congress party were ready to concede it in advance, the Muslims were ready to resort to arms.

"Only over the dead bodies of Muslims," he declared, "will the Congress party flag fly in the northern Provinces."

Thus in the course of about twenty years the Muslim League's position had gradually changed from that of an earnest desire to safeguard minority rights to the presentation of a virtual ultimatum on the issue of partition.

#### MAJOR INFLUENCES AT WORK

It seems likely that there have been two major influences at work here. First, as the Muslim League has gained in strength its position has become progressively more intransigent. But this is, in effect, a vicious circle. It was the popular appeal of the prejudicial slogans embodied in the Pakistan idea that had given the Muslim League its strength. From that strength came forth, in turn, stronger and stronger demands. Any refusal to grant them could be turned into more slogans. In a sense the League was caught in the momentum of its own success and took progressively more and more advanced positions from which retreat became more and more difficult. In the beginning it could readily have been assumed that the Pakistan demand was nothing more than the expression of an ideal. Obviously, what the Muslims really wanted was an effective safeguard for their political and civil rights. What they wanted was a high degree of local autonomy and some guarantee they would not be at the disposal of a majority community that might prove to be unsympathetic. The Pakistan idea was, in short, a bargaining position from which the Muslim

League could withdraw in a compromise to an advantageously safeguarded status within an Indian union.

During the time that I was in India (and that was in this period of growing Muslim demands), it was repeatedly said to me, "It is an old Oriental custom. Anyone who is bargaining asks for more than he expects to get. Jinnah talks Pakistan so as to be able to settle for less."

By 1946 that appeared to be no longer the case. The idea had fastened itself upon the Muslim community so successfully that it became extremely difficult for any League leader to retreat from the position in its strongest terms. Those strongest terms, by that time, meant, simply, partition or war. It is extremely difficult to believe that any Indian, Muslim or otherwise, really wants a civil war; but it also became very difficult to see how the Pakistan proposal, once it had become the dominant idea in all Muslim political thought, could be compromised short of some specific recognition of Muslim sovereignty.

The other factor that was obviously at work in the progressive stiffening of Muslim demands was the time factor. With the actual approach of self-government for India, in the form of concrete proposals, the situation had gone beyond that of expressing political aspirations and had come down to an actual definition in constitutional terms of the place that each group in the society would occupy. When that became the case, it was no more than natural that each group should undertake to define for itself the most advantageous position possible. There would have been no occasion for any party to attempt to stake out its place in the sun if it had not been for the increasing conviction that the sun would shortly be there to be disposed of.

#### THE CHARGE OF INSINCERITY

It is relatively easy to challenge the sincerity of Mr. Jinnah and his followers in the League. The progression of the demands has followed such an obvious pattern that the whole program has sometimes been represented as a prearranged scheme. Some Anglophobes, for example, have gone so far as to suggest that the entire Pakistan idea was a British creation in the first place, and that its sole purpose was to make completely impossible an orderly British withdrawal from India. That view will not bear honest examination. There is no evidence at any point of British support



for the Pakistan idea. There has been repeated British insistence on the definition of the rights of minorities and insistence upon specific agreements for their protection. This insistence has not taken the form, at any time, of the suggestion that partition was a proper or even a tolerable solution of this problem.

It has been further suggested that the whole Pakistan idea is mere obstructionist tactics by the Muslims to prevent a British withdrawal. Some persons have asserted that the Muslims genuinely desire the British retention of India on the ground that only under the sovereignty of an outside power can they enjoy security. Some Muslims have occasionally given a basis for this charge by impassioned declarations that they would actually prefer British rule to Hindu rule. A close inspection of most of such declarations would suggest that they be put down as rhetoric. The Muslims are trying to make a case against Hindu domination, and in so doing they may compare what they believe to be the disadvantages of Hindu rule with the character of British rule as a whole, since that is an obvious figure of speech. To go from that to the supposition that the Muslims are really not devoted to self-determination is stretching oratory too far. The whole of Asiatic political thought in the last two generations has been moving toward nationalism and independence. The impact of the idea of self-determination has been felt both in the Far East and, indeed, all over the Muslim world. It is unreasonable to suppose that it has not been felt by Muslims in India.

It has been necessary, therefore, to accept the Pakistan proposal at something very close to its face value. It may have had its origins in fear and distrust, but it has become a sincere political aspiration. As such it cannot simply be brushed aside as a bargaining point, a bit of tactics or an obstructive piece of political chicane.

#### REACTION OF THE HINDUS

Unfortunately the reaction of the Hindu community to the proposal has often fallen very largely into these latter accusations.

The growth of the Muslim League as a distinctively religious party had an impact on religious groups in the other communities. Out of the religious revival in Hinduism in the latter part of the last century, there had grown up a new Indian political party, the Mahasabha, or Great

Gathering. This group was definitely and clearly committed as a religious party, primarily. The Mahasabha stood in opposition to the Congress party because the Congress party admitted persons of other than Hindu faith. With the rise of the Muslim League the Mahasabha became crystallized as an anti-Muslim party. It contested with the League on specifically religious grounds, and the most bitter polemics in India came out of the exchange between the Mahasabha and the League. The opposition to the Pakistan idea was expressed in a Mahasabha slogan, no less potent in its popular appeal than the call for a Muslim state the Mahasabha characterized Pakistan as "the vivisection of Mother India." That was an effective slogan and it set the almost instinctive prejudices of one group against another.

The Mahasabha was not involved in the disturbances of 1942, so during subsequent years it carried the brunt of the Hindu opposition to the Muslim League and to the idea of partition. It was not a thoughtful opposition and it was not constructive. The Mahasabha therefore had a period of temporary gains in several Provinces, but subsequently, with the return of the Congress party to the scene, the Mahasabha lost ground. In the general elections of 1945 it failed to win a single seat of the twenty-one it contested. But in the meantime some of its members had gone into, or gone back with, the Congress party, and this may have helped to increase the bitterness of Congress party rejection of partition.

The heat of the opposition that was engendered by some of the political campaigns resulted, in 1945 and 1946, in an increasing number of genuinely religious riots. These, in turn, added fuel to the flame of division between the two communities, and so again a vicious circle was set up. Thoughtful Hindu opposition to the Pakistan idea was not based on religious grounds at all. But popular opposition often took the form of localized religious riots that were excessively brutal and violent. All of these factors made the finding of a common ground increasingly difficult.

#### BASIS FOR OPPOSITION

The really able Hindu opposition to the Pakistan idea (and its subsequent rejection by the British Cabinet mission) came, not from this outburst of violence, but from close scrutiny of the precise proposals Mr. Jinnah made to Gandhi in 1944. It was possible to examine the areas under

discussion, and that examination readily revealed the fact that the claim of a compact Muslim state was fallacious.

India's 100,000,000 Muslims can be divided very roughly into two large groups one of about fifty million in the northwest, and one of about thirty million in the northeast. The remaining Muslims are scattered throughout almost all of India. But those two large Muslim concentrations are not, in themselves, compact or exclusive. In the northwestern area, for example, in that part of the proposed Pakistan that would include the approximately fifty million Muslims, there are no less than thirty million Hindus. The Muslims call the Punjab "The Homeland of the Muslims" and the "Heart of Pakistan." And yet in the Punjab the Muslims have only a slender majority. In addition to the large Hindu community, there is the compact group of 4,500,000 Sikhs. Similarly, in the northeast, the Province of Bengal, which has been included in the Pakistan proposal, the Muslims actually have just about half of the population of the Province.

The Pakistan plan, therefore, would at the outset bring into existence a new sovereign state in which the problem of the large minority would be just as acute as it would be if the Muslims were an unqualified part of an Indian union. The Muslims have insisted, repeatedly, that their minority position in India as a whole is intolerable, but the Pakistan proposal suggests a corresponding minority position for at least fifty million Hindus, and almost five million Sikhs in areas of Muslim sovereignty.

If sovereign division is to be placed on the basis of group self-determination, the process has no limits. If the Muslims can demand a separate Pakistan on the Indian subcontinent, then, logically, they cannot deny the right of the Hindus, living within the borders of such a state, to form another substate of their own, nor can they challenge, in principle, the right of the Sikhs to set up their own independent state. Partition and fragmentation could go on in this way almost indefinitely.

This problem is demonstrated most clearly in the case of the Sikh community. This group has resisted strongly and articulately the entire program for Indian division.

The Sikhs are conscious of their own identity to a very high degree. They began as a religious community. They fought the British and then came to terms with them that they themselves regard as an honorable

alliance between equals. They are compact geographically, being concentrated in a few districts of the eastern Punjab, and they are compact socially because of the feeling of difference between themselves and either Hindus or Muslims. They do not oppose the concept of an independent India, provided that their own peculiar status is fully recognized by all other parties. They believe that they can obtain this recognition from the British. They are fairly confident that such a recognition could be obtained from the Hindus. They are convinced that it cannot be obtained from the Muslims. Consequently, Sikh opposition to the whole Pakistan idea has been strong and bitter.

The Sikhs resent, especially, the claim of the Muslims that the whole of the Punjab is the natural "heart" of a Muslim state. The Sikhs feel that they have just as much claim on the Punjab as do the Muslims, and they have made this clear whenever the opportunity presented itself.

The Sikhs became established as a religious community in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They were an offshoot of Brahmanism. They rejected polytheism and the caste system and governed themselves according to a strict and, by our standards, highly enlightened ethical code laid down by their great teachers, or apostles, the "Gurus." In the nineteenth century they were welded into a strong physical and military state in the eastern Punjab, by their great leader Ranjit Singh. In religious belief and practice they differ from other groups and they hold that this difference, and the hereditary right to the district in which they live, must be respected.

In 1945 Sardar Harnam Singh presented a memorandum to the Sapru Committee, setting forth this point of view. He said:

The Sikhs maintain that the Punjab is and must remain inalienably the homeland, the holy land, of the Sikhs. The facts and figures on this point are so clear and overwhelming that nothing but sheer audacity can account for any claim to the contrary, including the fictitious claim that the Punjab is a Muslim province or that it comprises one of the homelands of the Muslims. The Sikhs have more than seven hundred historic Gurdwaras in the Punjab with rich endowments, and undying memories of their Gurus, saints and martyrs attached to them. The Sikhs have set up and are financing over 400 educational institutions, colleges, schools, girls' seminaries and technical establishments, thus making a contribution towards the educational progress of the Province out of all proportion to their numerical strength and far in excess of any such contribution made by other communities, particularly the Muslims. The policy of, and the atmos-

phere prevailing in, these institutions, is more liberal and non-communal than that provided in any similar institution run by other communities.

The major heads of the Provincial Receipts are land revenue, excise, stamps and water rates, which in themselves constitute seventy-six per cent of the total revenues. Of these, it can be safely asserted that the Sikhs contribute more than forty per cent. One has only to refer to the difficulties experienced in the early colonization days and see how the Colonization Officers are full of praise for the Sikh colonists. By sheer dint of their hard work, the Sikhs have not only made barren and waste lands fertile but also have created an insatiable desire amongst the Punjabis for canal-irrigated land which has incidentally raised the price of land. The Sikhs own the best and most fertile lands of the Province, the fertility of which is not so much the result of accident as the result of sustained labours of the Sikh cultivators themselves.

In view of these considerations it is difficult to appreciate the Muslim claim that the Punjab is a Muslim province, particularly so when the non-Muslims own more than eighty per cent of the urban property and pay more than eighty per cent of Income-tax and Urban Property Tax in the Punjab. An overwhelmingly major proportion of the industrial enterprises, factories, mills, the insurance companies, film industry and business shop-keeping trade and commerce is in non-Muslim hands, not so much again by accident but by virtue of their skill, industry and special aptitude. The cultural life of the province is primarily created and determined by impulses emanating from non-Muslim sources.

The Sikhs' reaction to the British Cabinet missions' program for India in 1946 followed this line also. They were prompt and forthright in rejecting a program for federation that would place the Sikh community within an automatically designated Muslim area. Master Tara Singh, their political leader, promptly voiced his opposition to the British plan, and he based that opposition solely on the ground that the Sikhs had been placed within the political framework of a Muslim Provincial group and that this was a denial of their own identity.

This attitude is partially the result of the lack of confidence among the Sikhs that their own peculiar traditions and religious observances would be fully respected. There is, for example, a complete difference in the Sikh mode of slaughtering from that of the Muslim. As a matter of ceremonial practice, the Sikhs kill their animals with one sharp blow. The meat that they obtain has its own term, *jatka*, and it has become a point of controversy with other communities. Sikhs insist upon the right to eat *jatka* meat, and insist that their freedom to prepare their food in their own fashion must not be interfered with. Similarly, the Sikh religious faith requires the individual to wear, at all times, a ceremonial knife. The Sikhs

have demanded that in any guarantee of the political rights their freedom to wear this knife must not be interfered with. What the Sikhs are really concerned with is not so much the preferred status they would like to enjoy in a federal union, but rather, the actual guarantee that their civil rights, religious practices and customary law will not be interfered with by a majority to which they would be made subject.

This lack of confidence in the rule of a differentiated group is not peculiar to the Sikhs. The Hindus, similarly, are not confident of their security under Muslim rule, any more than the Muslims are confident of their security under Hindu rule. Thus the proposal to create a Pakistan has raised the issue of all minorities. The Hindu and the Sikh position (as well as that of the British) is that a sovereign Pakistan could not solve the problem of minorities; it could only create new problems in the same field.

There has been strong Hindu objection to the Pakistan plan, also, on the ground of its geography. The two areas projected by Mr. Jinnah are almost one thousand miles apart. Theoretically the two parts of Pakistan would be part of one sovereign government, but their borders are not contiguous. Thus, from the practical point of view, what has been proposed is the division of India, not into two states, but into three. In the early days of the discussion of Pakistan, frequent reference was made to the possibility of establishing a corridor between these two areas. That corridor, however, would have to cross two Provinces, the United Provinces and Bihar, that are overwhelmingly Hindu.

The corridor proposal had, in addition, an even graver drawback. That corridor, if it did provide any means of communication, would have to go directly down the valley of the Ganges. The Ganges, in turn, is one of the most sacred of all religious symbols to the Hindus. It is obviously beyond imagination that the Hindus would allow hundreds of miles of the Ganges Valley to be turned into the political and physical highway between two Muslim states.

In the discussions of the geography of Pakistan, the Hindus, at different times, made tentative proposals that if a definition of its limits were to be made all border areas should have the right of non-accession by plebiscite. This means that districts, particularly in the eastern part of the Punjab and in the western part of Bengal, would be allowed to vote as to

whether they would be attached to Pakistan or Hindustan. Such proposals were violently rejected by the Muslim League, for obvious reasons. All of the border areas in question are overwhelmingly Hindu in population. Naturally they would vote accession to Hindustan and there would be an immediate shrinkage in the size of Pakistan and a substantial gain for the Hindu areas. In the sixteen eastern districts of the Punjab the Muslims are outnumbered almost three to one. In Bengal it is extremely doubtful if any districts from Calcutta west could be carried by the Muslims in a plebiscite and Calcutta itself is more than three-fourths Hindu.

In this connection it should be noted that all of the plebiscite proposals that have been made by the Muslim League are intended to apply to the Muslim electorate only. In the British proposal of 1942 the right of provincial non-accession was based, it was explained, upon a plebiscite of the Indian electorate to be called in the event that 60 per cent of the legislative body favored non-accession. This was sharply rejected by the Muslims on the ground that Pakistan was an issue for Muslims to decide and not for Hindus.

To the Hindu this seems fantastic. It suggests, in effect, that a majority of 40 per cent of the Province of Bengal, for example, could determine whether or not Bengal acceded to an Indian union. That means, actually, putting the political fate of the most populous province in India in the hands of 25 per cent of its electorate.

Thus the Hindu objections to Pakistan have been based on much more than religious grounds. They have been based on an examination of the proposal in its practical aspects.

#### BRITISH GROUND FOR REJECTION

The same thing is true in respect to the British rejection of the whole Pakistan idea. The Muslims may have supposed, at one time, that the British concern for minorities was sufficiently great that the idea of partition could be entertained. When, in addition, the 1942 proposals recognized the thesis of non-accession, the Muslims felt that they might be able to count on substantial British support.

If they held this idea they were sharply disabused by the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, in October of 1942. The Viceroy declared, in unmistakable terms, that the Pakistan proposal was not looked upon favorably by the

British Government. It was not regarded, he said, as the proper solution for the problem of communal division in India.

Surprise and chagrin were expressed in the Muslim press at the Viceroy's statement. There was no occasion, certainly, for either. The attitude of His Majesty's Government had been made unmistakably clear more than a year earlier. In August, 1941, Leopold S. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, had placed himself on record in the House of Commons with a declaration that the objections to Pakistan were manifold and "insuperable." At that time Mr. Amery declared:

It is today a matter of general acceptance that India should, as soon as practicable, attain to Dominion Status, or as I prefer to describe it to a free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth. Today, the major issue is not whether India should govern herself but how she is to govern herself; under what type of constitution it is possible to preserve her unity and yet secure freedom and reasonable self-expression for the varied elements which compose her national life.

Six years ago that issue had hardly loomed over the horizon. We knew there was the communal problem and we assumed that we had met it by providing for separate communal franchise. We knew there were hesitations by the Princes as to the surrender of their powers and we provided specially favourable terms in order to induce them to come in. But we and Indian Political leaders alike took it for granted that the Central Government of India should follow the customary lines of our British system of responsible parliamentary government and the Act of 1935 was framed on that assumption.

In India experience of party Government in the provinces has rightly or wrongly convinced great and powerful elements in Indian national life that their lives and their liberties would not be assured under the central provisions of the present Act or under any amendment of it which would still leave the Executive control of all India in the hands of a Government, dependent upon a parliamentary majority from day to day which, in its turn, obeys unswervingly the dictates of an outside executive. This reaction against the dangers of what is called the Congress *Raj* or the Hindu *Raj* has gone so far as to lead to a growing demand from Muslim quarters for a complete breaking up of India into separate Hindu and Muslim dominions. I need say nothing today of the manifold, and to my mind, insuperable objections to such a scheme, at any rate in its extreme form. I would only note that it merely shifts the problem of permanent minorities to somewhat smaller areas without solving it. It is a counsel of despair and, I believe, wholly unnecessary despair, for, I do not doubt that there is enough constructive ability and enough natural goodwill among the Hindus and Muslims and enough Indian patriotism to find a constitutional solution which will give fair recognition to all communities and all interests.



The subsequent efforts of Britons and the Government of India and of the British missions to India to find a common ground of agreement short of partition have given ample evidence of the British objection to the idea, and should have made it plain that the 1946 proposals would not include it.

There are a number of broad grounds upon which this British objection is based in addition to the grounds for Hindu objection in many of which the British concur. Those grounds should be once more briefly summarized. The first is that the British take more pride in the unification of India than in possibly any of their other political accomplishments in the country. It is the considered boast of British administrators that in the course of a hundred years they have been able to take a chaotic collection of disjointed states, which they found in a condition of continual friction and virtual anarchy, and gradually to weld them into something of the semblance of a political union. They have been obliged to cope with large distances and they have built a splendid network of railways to pull India together. There are 43,000 miles of railways in India, making this network the fifth in size in the world. There are 230,000 miles of improved road in India, which have also played the part in creating a working union in the subcontinent. There are a score of major languages in India and several hundred dialectic variations. The British have brought in English as a language of commerce and government and taught millions of Indians to use it. There has been set up for the country as a whole a uniform system of coinage and currency. There is a single system of tariffs and excises that makes of the country as a whole a working economic entity.

There are so many diverse factors in the Indian scene that the natural political and economic urge of the country has been centrifugal throughout its long history. There has been the tendency to split up on almost any provocation.

British rule, on the other hand, has given India a hundred years of domestic peace, has brought communities together instead of separating them, and has finally set up a pattern of government and of law that is relatively uniform. At this stage, therefore, the British have been extremely loath to see those accomplishments cast aside. Most of the last century of administration in India has consisted of breaking down bar-

riers. The British cannot be expected, therefore, to look with equanimity on the erection of a new set of barriers at this point.

#### FOREIGN RELATIONS

In the field of foreign relations there has been also substantial British objection to the Pakistan plan because it would mean the creation of a new, independent Far Eastern Muslim state. Some of the life lines of the United Kingdom go through the Mediterranean and in addition, British commerce has a very important stake in the whole of the Middle East, particularly in its petroleum resources. The British Mediterranean and Middle Eastern position has been severely challenged at a number of points. One of those challenges arises from the growth of a feeling of community among the Middle Eastern Muslim states. The best evidence of this is the rise of the Arab League. It is possible for any one of the small Muslim states to make representations to the United Kingdom on a very much firmer basis if it has the support of half a dozen colleagues.

Out of these developments there has grown the fear of a threat to the whole British Empire position through a Pan-Islamic movement. If a Muslim state in India were joined to such a movement, there would be a solid working Islamic belt reaching all the way from the North African Mediterranean, across Egypt, the whole of the Middle East, Afghanistan and across India. If policies of a Muslim India were determined through collaboration with the other Muslim states, if Pakistan became indeed an adjunct of the Arab League, the British would find themselves dealing with a solid bloc that extended virtually from Gibraltar to the Bay of Bengal. And Pakistan, moreover, would be the most populous of all the Muslim nations.

There are some reasons why apprehension on this score is justified. If an independent Pakistan were to be created, it would have foreign relations to conduct and it might very easily, in those relations, come under the domination of outside influence. The Muslim community in India has not, up to the present time, produced a group of outstanding political leaders who would, naturally and easily, resist outside influence. On the contrary, the Indian Muslims would be obliged to form a government in which very few persons, indeed, had had any experience in international affairs. Because of this fact, such a government's susceptibility to influ-

ences from outside sources where that experience had been had would be almost inevitable. The British do not look with enthusiasm on the prospect of having policy for the north of India dictated or suggested from Cairo.

Another major factor in British apprehension arises from the fact that the Pakistan areas would, in both the northwest and the northeast, take in India's land frontiers. The defense of India has always been involved, primarily, in the establishment of a formidable, solid northwest frontier. This has always been the highway to India. In the last war, however, the eastern frontier was also proved to be vulnerable when the Japanese came through Burma and invaded the State of Manipur.

As far as land attack is concerned, the defense of the whole subcontinent would rest, therefore, on a community that represents only about one-fourth of the population and is vitally deficient in the resources with which modern warfare is waged. At some points, also, the Muslim area would be so narrow that proper defense in depth could not be organized.

The Muslims have suggested, from time to time, that the British might wish to maintain a defense establishment in Pakistan and that this could be arranged. Such a position would constitute a drain on British resources and would put the British in the uncomfortable position of accepting responsibility without exercising authority. In addition, it is extremely difficult to see how the fiction of independence could be for long maintained if there were a continuing alien force on Indian soil. Recognizing this fact, the Muslims have now changed their position and have insisted that all British forces should be withdrawn.

From the international point of view, also, there is definite British apprehension in regard to the aims of Russia. The creation of Pakistan, many Britons feel, would make India considerably more vulnerable to a possible Russian incursion.

Russian expansionism has long looked to the Middle East. The struggle for control of Iran, in the recent period, is in some sense a repetition of the British-Russian diplomatic tug-of-war over Afghanistan that has been taking place for the last sixty years. If India is weakened and divided it constitutes an open invitation for the Russians to come in. Certainly the Muslims in India know this, and it was undoubtedly with an idea of playing on British apprehension that Sir Firoz Khan Noon declared, in India,

in April, 1946, that "if the British don't give us Pakistan, the Russians will."

The British withdrawal from India will make India's position as a whole strategically weaker, unless India makes strong Commonwealth commitments. The partition of India, and the initiation through partition of a period of struggle for advantage, might very easily set up a situation in India in which a power vacuum was created. The Soviet Union is not insensitive to such power vacuums within the reach of its borders. So on this score, also, the British are apprehensive about the possibility of a Muslim state in northern India.

---

## VIII. THE QUESTION OF CIVIL WAR

---

THE COLLAPSE OF THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES AT SIMLA ON MAY 12, 1946, again raised the issues of how Hindu and Muslim points of view could possibly be reconciled. The division had been growing deeper as discussions about constitutional change became progressively more detailed. Actually, in the period between 1942 and 1946, there were five different attempts to bring the Muslims and Hindus to a common ground. In each case the backlash of such attempts appeared to be a stiffening of resistance in each of the communities to the idea of compromise.

It was not until late in 1945, possibly as the result of the election campaign, that talk of civil war became a commonplace in the utterances of political leaders. This represented one change in some of the characteristic discussions of India's political situation.

For a number of years British writers on India had suggested the possibility of bloodshed in India if British authority were withdrawn. These suggestions had frequently been held up by Indian nationalists as a figment of the Imperialist imagination. It was good doctrine to assert, on the contrary, that if British authority were withdrawn the two Indian parties would quickly and cheerfully compose their differences.

When the actual terms of the withdrawal were discussed, however, talk of a settlement by force of arms began to appear, not from British observers, but from the Indians themselves. Some of the earlier utterances had been inclined to minimize the danger of such strife. Back in 1942, Gandhi said, for example, "It is quite possible that we shall fight like cats and dogs when we are left to ourselves." Gandhi apparently believed that any such clashes would be of short duration and of no great consequence. He said subsequently, for example, in his magazine, *Harijan*:

I have no doubt that if British rule, which divides us by favoring one or the other, as it suits the Britishers, were withdrawn tomorrow Hindus and Muslims would forget their quarrels and live like the brothers which we are. But suppos-

ing the worst happened and we had a civil war. It would last for a few days or a few months and then we would settle down to business.

Now quite apart from this rather casual acceptance of the possibility of civil war by the world's outstanding exponent of non-violence, the subsequent utterances of Hindu and Muslim leaders did not suggest that fratricidal strife in India would or could be brushed aside quite so easily. The Muslims in particular, being the minority, began to speak not merely of fighting, but of "fighting to the death."

At the same time another note began to be struck, both by Indians themselves and by some Americans. It was suggested that civil war, perhaps, was not merely inevitable but possibly a logical and desirable consummation in India. Some Indian nationalist leaders went so far as to hold up the example of the United States, pointing out that a desperate civil war was required in this country before the issues of federalism and State's Rights were ultimately resolved. Some Americans also suggested that possibly the proper course of action was for the British to withdraw from India and to allow the conflicting parties to find their own level through a test of strength. This, incidentally, had become increasingly the Congress party's position as it became more and more confident of its tremendous preponderance. The Congress party spokesman, however, continued to decry the prospect of actual war.

But behind the almost casual acceptance of the idea that war might be inevitable was a feeling that in the juxtaposition of the Congress party's insistence on a unified India, and the Muslim League's insistence on a divided India, an irresistible force had, apparently, met an immovable object. Presumably the only way in which a working constitutional union could be achieved was for one side to accede to the other, and presumably that accession could not be brought about by persuasive means.

#### AN IMPOSED SOLUTION

There was, of course, always one other alternative; there was the possibility that an arbitrary decision could be made by Great Britain and imposed upon both parties. This was the position taken by the Sapru Committee in 1945 when they insisted that progress toward self-government was essentially a British rather than exclusively an Indian responsibility. Consequently they suggested that in the event of the permanent irrec-

conciliation of the two Indian points of view, His Majesty's Government should make its own decision and impose it. The mission of 1946 was, in fact, obliged to take the first part of this course and submit its own recommendations when the Indian parties failed to produce any. But still it could not, and did not, suggest imposition.

It has been extremely difficult for the British to accept the reasoning that Britain, and not India, must create Indian union, and they have been extremely loath to accept the responsibility that goes with it. In the first place, it violates the essential concept that has dominated the enlightened British attitude toward India for the last twenty-five years. That concept is that an Indian government must be the product of Indians. It has been held, with some justice, that some of the forms of Western rule have proved to be so distasteful that the Indians themselves must supply the correctives and the substitutes. More than that, it is recognized that for the sake of stability in the whole of the Far East an Indian government should be strong and not weak. The strength of such a government will depend necessarily upon the support that it receives from Indians themselves. It is not to be supposed that a British decision, made against the wishes of one party or another, or more probably both, would receive that necessary degree of whole-hearted Indian support. As a result, India would face another long period of resistance to the essential structures of government by one group or another.

The actual experience in the Conferences of 1942 and of 1946 suggested an even more unpleasant possibility. The British, in their desire to reach a common ground and to find the widest basis for agreement, actually found themselves in both the quoted instances, supporting a position between the two parties and therefore unacceptable to both of them. At this point the problem of imposing a decision becomes not merely a question of imposing a pro-Muslim decision as against the Hindus, or a pro-Hindu decision as against the Muslims, but the necessity of imposing a pattern of government accepted by neither and resisted by both. The ground for objection in the two camps would, of course, continue to be diametrically opposed. Each group would insist that too much concession had been made to the other.

This, in turn, would involve the necessity, not merely of arriving at what was regarded as a fair adjudication of the issues, but the further

necessity of implementing the decision once it had been reached. As matters stood, when a deadlock was reached at the Simla conference, the Congress party campaign had declared publicly that it would fight both the British and the Muslims before it would accept the partition of India. The Muslim League, on the other hand, had declared publicly that it would fight both the British and the Hindus before it would accept Hindu majority rule. The attempt to implement a proposal, therefore, might very well find the British in the position of facing hostilities from both sides, while each fought the other.

Even if that could be avoided, the imposition of an award by the British would necessarily mean the retention either of British military force in India or the retention of British control of the Indian forces already organized there and in existence. The first course of action is a complete denial of the whole suggestion of independence to which the British are committed, and both Indian groups have declared their opposition to it. The second is a commitment to the use of Indian forces against Indians in a cause in which their loyalty would be a matter of the gravest doubt. No commander in his senses would send Muslim troops into a predominantly Muslim Province to force accession to an Indian union. Nor could he send Hindu troops into a Hindu area to enforce the validity of partition. In either case, the only military alternative would be to send Hindus against Muslims, or Muslims against Hindus, and thus actually to create, under British authority, precisely the civil war that the British would be trying to avoid.

#### CHANGING THE INDIAN ARMY

Moreover, an essential part of the whole growth of Indian self-government is the development of the Indian Army away from British control. Every Indian political party has insisted, for a long time, that reorganization of the Army is a first essential step in self-government. That program is already being carried out by British military authorities. The commander-in-chief, Sir Claude Auchinleck, announced to the Upper House of the Indian legislature in April, 1946, the plans for rapid and complete Indianization. He said:

The Government's intention is to create a completely national Army, that is an Army officered and manned throughout by Indians, in the shortest possible



space of time without lowering the very high standard of efficiency which obtains in the Indian Army today.

India already has a really efficient Army, the rank and file of which is, for all practical purposes, 100 per cent Indian. It is the nationalization of the officers which constitutes the problem today.

It is the declared policy of the Government of India that the British officer element of the Indian Army shall be replaced by Indian officers as soon as possible, compatible with the maintenance of efficiency of the Army as a whole. There is therefore no controversy on this point. Personally I have no doubt that India can eventually produce sufficient Indians of the right type to provide all officers likely to be needed to lead the Armed Forces of India in the future.

"The future Indian Army," Sir Claude went on, "will require about 9,000 regular officers according to a tentative estimate."

He expressed the hope that in the near future 5,100 officers, British and Indian, would be available. To fill the gap of 4,000 more officers, the Government of India had to resort, he said, to the following temporary expedients:

First of these was the secondment of British officers from the British Army until there were enough Indian officers sufficiently trained to take over from them. No more British officers, he stated, are to be appointed permanently to the Indian Army. They would be attached for a short specified term of service.

The second expedient was the retention in the services of the emergency commissioned officers, British and Indian, who might be willing to extend their service for a year or two.

The third expedient was the granting of a number of short service commissions to Indians already serving in one grade or the other for five or three years according to age. These would help to tide over the period until the new National War Academy got into its stride when it was hoped to produce five or six hundred officers annually.

Then Sir Claude concluded:

No one has the present and future interests of that Army more closely at heart than I have. I have pledged myself to give effect to the policy of complete nationalization as rapidly as may be possible without impairing efficiency.

This whole program presupposes that British authority will be taken out of the Indian Army as rapidly as possible. Obviously, if this is done, British authority cannot reverse itself and use the Indian Army as the

instrument to implement a political policy that is opposed by one or both major groups in India.

Now let us suppose, for a moment, that worst must actually come to worst and that a civil war would be tolerated in India. What would happen?

#### DIVISION OF STRENGTH

In the first place, the actual military strength of the two contending groups would, in the beginning, be fairly evenly divided.

A survival in the field of misinformation about India is the supposition that the military forces are overwhelmingly Muslim. It is still believed, in some quarters, that there are essentially "martial races" in India, that these form the backbone of military strength, and that these "martial races" come almost exclusively from the areas of Muslim domination.

What has actually happened is this: There has been a gradual transformation in the character of the Indian military over a period of years until the balance no longer favors the Muslims. In the period following the Indian Mutiny the British drew their recruits primarily from those areas that had been loyal, and consequently gave extra weightage to some of the Muslim Provinces. At that time, also, as a matter of military practice, it was determined that the technical arms, and particularly the artillery, should be kept in the hands of British regiments. Similarly, in the period of the large growth of the Indian Army, there was emphasis on the place of the infantry and cavalry and relatively little emphasis on the technical and service branches.

Beginning in the Thirties the character of recruiting changed and the character of warfare changed. The splendid Punjabi foot-soldier became relatively less important. The man behind a machine gun could be shorter in stature and still be thoroughly formidable. Likewise, the growth of more complex weapons required a considerably larger Department of Ordnance and the use of motor vehicles called for services of supply on a vastly more complex scale. Eventually there were added to the Indian Army an Air Force and a Navy. There was no occasion for Muslim predominance in any of these fields, and as a result, recruiting went up among Hindus and proportionately down among Muslims. In the early Thirties it was usually estimated that the Muslims controlled about 70 per cent

of the armed services. Actually, this figure was an exaggeration because the majority group was simply non-Hindu, which was a vastly different thing.

In the non-Hindu group were two other very important fighting components that were not Muslim. First of these was the Sikhs. This splendid community had a tradition of loyalty and of militancy. Recruiting was always high among the Sikhs and they occupied a proportionate place in the Army out of all relation to their numbers. The second group was the Gurkhas. The Gurkhas, of course, are not only not Muslims and not Hindus, they are not even Indians. The Gurkhas are volunteers from the neighboring protectorate, Nepal, and are extremely proud and sensitive in respect to their non-Indian character.

At the outbreak of the war these various communities were represented in the Indian Army in these proportions. The Hindus and the Muslims were by that time exactly balanced with 36 per cent each of the total number of enlisted men. The Sikhs made up 15 per cent of the soldiery and the Gurkhas, 12 per cent. One per cent of the troops was made up of Indian Christians.

Four years of recruitment, particularly in the technical branches, changed these figures considerably. The Muslim percentage dropped to thirty-two. The Hindu percentage, meanwhile, went up to forty-seven. The Indian Christian percentage went up to five; the Sikhs dropped to seven; and the Gurkhas to nine. In the present composition of the Indian Army, therefore, in enlisted men, the Muslims actually command less than one-third. The Hindus are slightly under one-half.

The Royal Indian Navy, at the outbreak of the war, had in its commissioned personnel, 47 per cent Hindus, 22 per cent Muslims, 8 per cent Indian Christians, and 12 per cent Anglo-Indians. By 1945 the percentage of both Hindu and Muslim officers had dropped. The Hindus had 32 per cent, the Muslims 18 per cent, the Indian Christians 16 per cent, the Anglo-Indians 17 per cent, and the tiny Parsi community had come in with almost a tenth of the officers. Among the enlisted men, however, the Muslims maintained a somewhat higher percentage. In 1943 they had 48 per cent of the sailors and in 1945, 42 per cent. This loss was accounted for, principally, by the rise of Hindu enlisted men from 29 per cent to 35 per cent.

In the Royal Indian Air Force, the Hindu community is predominant. Only 16 per cent of the air officers are Muslims, 47 per cent are Hindus and 24 per cent are made up of Sikhs, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and Parsis. Among the enlisted airmen, the Hindus have just about 60 per cent, the Muslims only 17 per cent and the Indian Christians 18 per cent.

The composite of all these figures shows the Muslims to control not more than one-third of the total organized military forces of India. Some of the Muslim groups, particularly the Punjabis and the Pathans, have a fine reputation for military service and a high tradition of effectiveness. They have been offset, however, by the equally high tradition of the Hindu Marathas.

#### FIGHTING QUALITIES

Among the British staff officers to whom I have talked, the judgment has been made repeatedly that there is nothing to choose on fighting qualities between a good Muslim unit and a good Hindu unit. Some of the officers are especially partial to either Sikhs or Gurkhas, holding either one to be superior to any of the others. In a showdown between Hindus and Muslims, however, it is presumed that neither Sikhs nor Gurkhas would participate, and consequently it is fair to suggest that on actual fighting qualities comparison between the two predominant groups is no more than a stand-off.

In the course of military operations, particularly in Burma, it was occasionally felt that Muslim units were less susceptible to enemy propaganda, based on the appeal to nationalism, than were Hindus. Consequently the supposition grew up that there was something "safer" about a Muslim unit.

Actually the worst trouble that was caused by the trials of Indian officers who had served under the Japanese in the so-called "Indian National Army" hinged on the defection of Muslims. In any case, the question of loyalty or disloyalty would not arise in an Indian civil war since, obviously, each group would recruit its own adherents.

If we accept the military strength of the two groups as striking a relatively even balance, the same thing cannot be said of the military potential of the two communities they represent. From the point of view of re-

sources, both in manpower and materials, the Hindu group is immeasurably stronger. In population it outnumbers the Muslims at least two and one-half to one. There is the usual presumption that a substantial part of the Hindu community would not be available for military service, however, and this ratio can perhaps be scaled down somewhat. Even so, the Hindus would have manpower resources at least twice those of the Muslims.

#### BALANCE OF RESOURCES

In the matter of industrial resources, all of the advantages are also in the hands of the Hindus. They control the areas in which are situated the major deposits of coal and iron. They control most of the important industries that can be converted to military production. The actual fabrication of steel is in the hands of neither group, since the big operations are owned by Parsis. It can be assumed, however, that the characteristic division between the two groups would place the major industrial production under the Hindus and some of the best agricultural areas under the Muslims.

In the matter of ports, the advantage likewise rests strongly with the Hindu group. There are four major ports in India as we have noted. Only one of these, Karachi, is in a clearly Muslim-controlled area. Bombay and Madras are overwhelmingly Hindu. Calcutta is a point of contention. The population of Bengal Province is about equally divided between the two communities, but the city itself is overwhelmingly Hindu. Obviously the first phase of any struggle would be an attempt by the Muslims to gain control of the Port of Calcutta and the steel producing area of Bihar, southwest of that port. To make effective use of the resources so controlled (presuming that the conquest would be successful), the Muslims would have to take over control of the entire intervening area between their concentration in the northwest and their concentration in the northeast. The major campaigns would, therefore, center initially in the valley of the Ganges, from the Punjab eastward to the Bay of Bengal. Even if such campaigns were partially successful, the Muslims would still be faced with the necessity of controlling the ports farther south and at the very least, of shutting off Bombay which, in the long run, could occlude Karachi from the land side.

Before this could take place, the relative strength of the two communities would be felt and the contest might well develop into a war of attrition with time fighting always against the Muslims. But at this stage, it is even more likely that the war would have degenerated from a group of large-scale campaigns into a multiplicity of guerrilla actions. It is doubtful if either side would have, for a considerable period of time, sufficient force on hand to conduct major operations and at the same time to police effectively the large areas that might have been occupied. There would always be millions of Muslims in predominantly Hindu areas, and millions of Hindus in predominantly Muslim areas. It is quite obvious that there would be as much or more action behind every battle line as there would be on it.

There is no guarantee, furthermore, that such a struggle might not involve military operations on the part of still other communities that had no sympathy with either of the two principal belligerents. Most important of these is the Sikhs, and Sikh leaders have declared that they are fully prepared to fight either Muslims or Hindus in defense of their own integrity. It is possible that with sufficiently skillful political maneuvering the Sikhs might ultimately be induced to fight for the Hindus. It is extremely unlikely that they ever could be induced to take up arms on behalf of the Muslims.

The ultimate picture that emerges, therefore, is one of a long, difficult, fratricidal war on a thousand small battle fronts in which the total superiority of the Hindus would eventually make itself felt. Such a war would last at least ten years, and its outcome would inevitably be the defeat of the Muslims.

#### PROBABILITY OF INTERVENTION

Every bit of this is a purely hypothetical case. No civil war could go on in India for ten years without foreign intervention. That intervention might take a variety of forms, but the one thing that we can be certain will not happen is that the whole world will draw a cordon around India, turn it into a gigantic cockpit, and stand aside and watch the Indians fight it out.

The first thing, of course, is that the Muslims would call upon all of the Arab states to come to their assistance. They would, obviously, make

every possible attempt to turn such a war into a crusade. Similarly, the Hindus would undertake to get whatever support they could wherever they could get it. The Muslims have already talked about appealing to Russia for intervention, as we have noted. It is quite possible, however, that the Hindus could make a more cogent and effective appeal to Russia than could the Muslims. They would have more to offer.

In any case, it is not to be supposed that the British Government would tolerate such a war of attrition in India. There would be British intervention, possibly against both sides. There might very easily be the feeling among Britons that what was required was the entire reconquest of India, the setting up of a rule that whatever it did to the theory of self-determination had the merits of establishing and preserving law and order.

On the other hand, it is extremely unlikely that the British would contemplate, at this stage, any program of unilateral action in respect to India. The British Government has declared repeatedly that its present policy is involved entirely in support of the United Nations and in the success of that organization. The likeliest course of action, therefore, would be a British appeal for full-scale United Nations' intervention. Such a course of action, far from being a contradiction of British policy, would be a natural development. Such a development has, indeed, been foreshadowed by the British appeal to the United States to share in the responsibility for finding and enforcing a suitable solution in Palestine.

The success of a British appeal to the United Nations for enforcement of an Indian solution, however, would necessarily be contingent, in part, upon the character of the solution imposed. The United Nations, also, has its Muslim member-states, and the degree to which they could be persuaded to implement a peace in India that was regarded as unfavorable to the Muslims is a matter of serious question.

There is the further possibility that the military forces of the United Nations might be called upon to undertake a simple police job in India as against any party that undertook to breach the peace.

The scope of such a project, however, is beyond anything that has been contemplated thus far in the military establishment proposed for the United Nations. Obviously what would be required would be not merely the garrisoning of a number of key positions, but the provision of a vastly detailed and complex administrative machinery whose authority would

be respected and whose orders would be obeyed. What that would boil down to would be a United Nations occupation of India, beside which the occupation of Germany, Italy or Japan would look like a six-week maneuver.

#### CIVIL WAR INTOLERABLE

These various prospects that have been sketched indicate how difficult are the political and military issues raised by the prospect of an Indian civil war. They do not touch upon the intolerable suffering that such a war would entail. India is already horribly poverty-stricken. India requires every ounce of productive resources for the pursuits of peace. Indians have to fight famine, not Indians. India has to fight illiteracy, epidemic diseases, superstition, unused potentialities. India has to fight a gigantic apathy and lethargy that has made it possible for a fifth of the world's population to live under conditions that are completely irreconcilable with any concept whatever of reasonable social and political progress. No country can afford a civil war, and India can afford one least of all.

For this reason the casual suggestion of some Americans that Indians should be left alone to fight it out, or the equally flippant suggestion of Gandhi that the Indians can have a six weeks' or a six months' war and then settle down to peace and brotherly love is outrageous and intolerable. It is a refusal to take the facts of life seriously.

It is to escape this frightful alternative that so many honest and earnest efforts have been made to reach a ground upon which at least the major differences could be composed. This was the basis for the sending of a British Cabinet mission to India in 1946. It must, of the grimmest necessity, be the continuing basis for repeated and, if necessary, incessant proposals. The Indians, the British, the Americans and the world cannot ever allow the drive for self-government in India to reach the position of a categorical alternative. Civil war is no possible solution. It must positively be ruled out, primarily and permanently.

#### NECESSITY FOR COMPROMISE

If we rule out the domination of Muslims by Hindus, and if, correspondingly, we rule out the idea that India must be permanently divided, we are faced with the necessity of devising some type of compromise that



will meet at least a part of the demands of each group. This was the purpose of the Cabinet mission that went to India in 1946. They declared that they did not propose to stand entirely on the substance of the War Cabinet's proposals of 1942, but were prepared to accept those proposals as a point of departure and to entertain the judgments of the major groups on the subject of a composition of differences. They suggested, eventually, as a basis for compromise, a federal union, deriving its support from two groups of states. One of these would be predominantly Hindu, and the other predominantly Muslim. Residual sovereignty would lie in the separate Provinces or groups of Provinces, but to a federation would be accorded control of such responsibilities as external affairs, defense, communication, and revenue needed to sustain them. This proposal eventually proved, at the Simla conference, to be unacceptable to the two parties.

The form that the British proposal took was one crystallized way in which the issue could be brought to some possibility of a common ground. That common ground, however, demands a group of concessions from both sides to the dispute. The British do not propose to be placed in the position of umpire or arbitrator, awarding to one side or the other the totality of its claims. Now actually the middle ground that is required is indicated with reasonable clarity by the factors that go into the case.

Presumably India is to be a federal union. This represents, in the beginning, the necessity for some compromise from the Muslim demand for outright partition. The arguments against two Indias are sufficiently sound that some basis must be found for preserving all of the form and some of the substance of a central government.

This is true, not only with respect to the division between Muslims and Hindus, but also with respect to the division between British India and Indian India. It is not supposed that one particular group will be or should be set up as the permanent, prevailing regime in the whole of India. The country is too large for one thing, and it is too greatly divided for another. The only possible answer at the stage that we have reached in political thought is some type of federation. If India is to have good government, India must have government as a whole. If this is a denial of the whole Pakistan theory, it is a denial, not on the basis that Muslims ought to be dominated by any other group, but on the basis that Muslims in the interests of the larger good should associate themselves with the

larger organization. Working uniformity and real unity in matters such as coinage and currency, communication and, indeed, external relationships, should be preserved. It has been hard to achieve and its loss would be a grave backward step.

This is, possibly, the largest single concession that must be demanded in the settlement of India's problems. From a Muslim point of view, it is a concession, not so much in practice as in principle. It seems, in effect, that the Muslim League must reverse its campaign of the last ten years and teach its followers that they are Indians first and Muslims second. This will not be easy, and it may, quite possibly, involve the decline of the present leaders of the Muslim League. If necessary, they must accept that inevitable outcome.

It must be emphasized that this step is necessary, not merely to compose the differences between Hindus and Muslims, and not merely to resist the pernicious theory that India can be and ought to be divided; it is also necessary because there is no other way in which Indian India, comprising one-fourth of the territory, can ever be brought into relationship with self-government.

Now when this major concession is made on the Muslim side, there is an equally important concession that must be made from the Congress party side. Because of the diversity of the elements involved in this federal union, it must be recognized that for a very considerable period of time such a union has to be loose-jointed and flexible. A union cannot possibly be operated on the principle of simple numerical majorities without raising up against itself the perpetual claim of tyrannical abuse.

This means, from the Hindu point of view, the sacrifice of the idea of a strong, fully empowered, solidly controlled government at the center. In point of political theory, the Hindus have much to support their contention that a weak government means a weak India. On the other hand, it is not possible to formulate a strong government unless the very strength of that government runs the continuous risk of becoming an indictment against it. While such a government might, therefore, present the appearance of strength in respect to its external relationships, it would have the vital weakness of lack of support and lack of sympathy in its internal composition.

For the time being, at least, this means the necessity of accepting the

thesis that residual sovereignty is vested in the units in any federation and not in the federation itself. That was the compromise that was effected in the United States. It was eventually resolved, in this country, through a broad legal interpretation of the implied powers that were delegated to the federation. Some similar procedure may be necessary in India. It may be required, in the interests of the demands of various minority groups, to reserve to them the largest possible degree of residual power and to limit sharply the functions that are assigned to the federal government. In the long run it is quite possible that practice and political necessity will dictate the degree to which the central government may properly assume functions that now are supposed to be a part of residual sovereignty.

#### EVENTUAL SOLUTION

When these various compromises have been made, and some form of functioning union has been set up, there still remains the fact that the real problem, that of communal differences, has not been solved. At best, India will have achieved a makeshift constitution to which various uneasy groups subscribe if only as a last alternative to a dreadful war and intervention from without.

Somehow that union must grow into a government in which the Indian, as an individual, can repose his entire trust. There will be, presumably, some sort of minorities commission to safeguard the rights of various communities and thus of the individuals within those communities. There will be some system of checks, some mode of artificial weightage, some substitute for parity between communities and equality among individuals.

But the great long-range problem of communal difference will not have been solved. There will still be minorities within minorities, wheels within wheels, and the citizen of India, rather than Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Parsi or Christian will still be waiting to emerge. This problem will not solve itself. Some means must be found, consciously to approach it.

Thus far the Western world has discovered only one such means. This is by the gradual inculcation and growth of a new concept of the relation of the individual to the state. That concept, in its simplest form, is what we know as the "Bill of Rights idea."

India, as we have seen, is a complex of self-identified groups. The individual in a very slowly changing society has associated himself with these groups, believing that they afford to him the only assurance of protection for his individuality.

The European or American who goes into India to live and work is often astonished at the high degree of dependence on the part of individuals for some sense of personal security. It is an obvious human need. When an Indian servant, for example, gets into trouble . . . it may be money trouble or family trouble, or it may be a boil on his leg . . . he comes to the *sahib*, takes the sahib's hand between his and looks up with melting brown eyes and murmurs, "You are my father and my mother, sir."

It comes as a great shock the first time, and it seems to be something of a speech affectation. It is not that, however. What the Indian is doing is expressing his sense of dependence upon the will and judgment of someone else. He needs help and so he turns to a source from which it can come and attributes to that source the functions that he associates with parenthood.

When the individual fails, he turns to the nearest group. The nearest group is the clan family. Thus he becomes dependent for his security upon the element of blood relationship. The immediate result in government, of course, is nepotism.

In addition, India has this complete network of caste that defines fully the relationship of more than half of its population to its immediate environment. The Indian, therefore, depends upon caste and its law to make judgments and to relieve him of the obligation of making them.

Now in modern India there has come also the organization of political parties, the rise of trade unions and the growth of merchants' associations, guilds and other such collective organizations. To these also the individual may turn for the defense of his status as an individual.

On the other hand, he has not learned to turn instinctively to the whole framework of constitutional law as the one thing that defines his position in the society and the one thing that defends it. Consequently the pressure of insecurity has had a tendency to sharpen group divisions rather than to soften them. The Muslim or the Sikh has come to believe that his membership in that particularly designated community is the only factor in the society upon which he can rely to preserve to him his individual

and social rights and liberties. As a result, in turn, he has demanded that those rights and liberties be defined within the limits of the several communities.

#### A DIFFERENT IDEOLOGY

This is the ideology that lies behind the insistence on the definition of minority rights and that led eventually to the Muslim demand for partition. It can be overcome only by the substitution of a quite different ideology. So long as individual rights, privileges and liberties are defined in terms of religious group affiliation or of religious law, there is no common denominator of liberty within the state. That common denominator exists in the Western world in the acceptance of the universal and non-divisible application of accepted constitutional law.

This concept, which represents in many ways the finest projection of Western political thought in the last three centuries, has not fallen upon fertile soil in India. Lip service has been paid to it, but it is not a part of the almost instinctive and genuinely unselfconscious reaction of the individual to his place in the state.

Actually the individual within the Provinces of British India has enjoyed, under the law, the very high degree of individual liberty. He has had statutory protection for his right of freedom of speech and of assembly, his freedom of movement and abode, his complete freedom of worship and, indeed, the blanket stipulation in the legal code under which he lives that no discrimination in respect to his personal or civil rights may be made by reason of caste, creed, sex or race. The difficulty is that the Indian simply doesn't believe this. He may disclaim against abuses, but he seeks remedial action by political organization rather than by laying claim to the rights that already exist. In many cases, indeed, he takes his grievance to the local party group or to the caste group rather than prosecuting it before the law. In some cases he takes it to the press.

It is extremely difficult to say how much can be done to change this characteristic attitude within a short space of time. The minority groups obviously believe that nothing can be done. They have no confidence in the impersonality of law and are insistent that the only way in which the rights of the individual can be safeguarded is by the specific reservation of authority to minority groups and within minority organizations as such.

The long-range answer, in any case, must be the creation of a uniform system of free, public, compulsory, secular education. But the effects of such a system, even if the Bill of Rights idea is made the very cornerstone of all of its instruction, can hardly be felt within less than one generation.

During the course of the war, it was suggested that the Government of India might embark on a fairly ambitious program of discussion of the Bill of Rights. This was obviously political dynamite in India in the course of the war, but even so there was a surprisingly receptive attitude toward the suggestion in high Government circles. Such a program would involve the use of all types of media for the influencing of public opinion and for real concentration on the definition of civil liberty. The practical difficulty involved was the fact that military operations necessitated certain arbitrary curtailments of individual freedoms of expression. Belligerents in the Western world accepted those curtailments almost automatically. Non-belligerents in the Eastern world were inclined, on the other hand, to believe that any discussion of civil rights was mere lip service to a doctrine that never would be put into practice. Consequently, in spite of the fact that a very large measure of civil liberty was sustained in India during the war, attention was focused on the arbitrary preservation of the Defense of India Regulations whose very character was a curtailment of individual liberties when they affected the security of the state. The result was that the cause of the Bill of Rights actually went backward instead of forward during the precise time when it was most important in the minds of persons who looked to the future of India.

#### GUARANTEES AT THE CENTER

The situation that has arisen since the war has made further emphasis on this concept extremely difficult. Logically, the point at which individual liberties should be guaranteed is the point of broadest possible application, that is, at the center. But since such a major division of opinion has existed over the control of the center the upshot has been to limit the functions at the center rather than to extend them. What it comes down to, in practice, is that a member of a minority community, such as the Muslims or the Sikhs, has no confidence that a central government with a Hindu majority would make any effort whatever to protect the rights of the individuals as individuals within minority groups.

This is a serious setback for the whole developing idea of modern government and modern democracy in India.

Is it not enough to write guarantees into statutes, and it is obviously not enough in the case of good government to limit the field, in which guarantees are operative, to designated minorities. The Indians already have confidence that their own specific minorities will guarantee their individual liberties if the minorities are allowed to function as recognized constituent parts of the state. This, however, serves in turn to modify, to undermine, and eventually to destroy the whole concept of the individual citizen within the state rather than in the minority, and the corollary of the guarantee within the state of his liberties and rights under the process of uniformly applicable law.

It is possible that at this point the growth of international concepts in the field of individual liberties, sponsored by the United Nations, may have an impact on India. It is barely conceivable that members of individual minorities within India might accept, with at least a partial degree of confidence, the guarantee of their position under a declared international code when they are not correspondingly confident under any domestic code.

The major political units in India will, in all possibility, be quite ready and willing to subscribe to any charter of rights that is set forth internationally. Those rights, indeed, are the very safeguards that they have demanded as individual communities. It is extremely unlikely that they would now repudiate them on an international scale.

The crux of the matter, however, lies in the issue of what body should secure the rights to the individual and guarantee their application. So long as there is a high mutuality of distrust among the various Indian communities, some non-Indian body may be required to define and adjudicate. In this field it is possible, therefore, that the United Nations may eventually make a substantial contribution to the solution of India's most difficult problem.

#### THE NEED FOR EXTERNAL SUPPORT

In the meantime, a compromise that dictates that no government at the center can be formed for a considerable period, unless it is a relatively weak government in point of sovereignty, raises a further question. This

is the question of how far an Indian union must be dependent upon external support, both political and economic, for its immediate survival.

That issue, in its practical phases, will arise in the self-governing Indian state when the Indians are obliged to decide for themselves whether they choose to remain within or to move without the orbit of the British Commonwealths. In its crudest form the issue is Dominion Status versus independence.

The existing Dominions of the British Commonwealth, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the South African Union, do not believe that this is an issue as far as they themselves are concerned. They are fully satisfied that their political status is completely independent and that their allegiance to the Crown is entirely voluntary. They accept, therefore, cheerfully and enthusiastically, the obligations that they have voluntarily assumed. They are jealous of their independent prerogatives. They insist, upon every occasion, that neither their policy nor their practices may be dictated from any external source. At the same time they acknowledge readily that their ties of loyalty and devotion are stronger, indeed, than could be any legal and sovereign bonds.

It is extremely doubtful that a corresponding attitude could be developed in India. When the matter is broached to Indian nationalists, they retort at once with the observation that the deciding issue in the British Commonwealth is that of race. They point out that there is a kinship of blood stocks in all of the major Dominions and that this makes it possible for them to accept a political pattern that would be totally unacceptable to Indians.

It is impossible to challenge that attitude if that is what Indians really feel. The emotions of individuals are as much a part of any political organization as the articles that are written into constitutions. If the Canadians steadfastly hold that they are free and give their loyalty to the Crown, there can be no dispute . . . they are free. If the Indians, on the other hand, honestly believe that they could not be a part of any political structure, such as the British Commonwealth, and still retain their essential autonomy, they would not be free, regardless of what the statutes said. For true freedom is not a condition under law. It is a state of mind and heart.

Nevertheless, under existing conditions, there are advantages that India can derive from a continuation of British Commonwealth associa-



tions that may make it advisable for an Indian federation to accept a position within British structures as a whole rather than to insist upon the technicality of total separation.

The element of defense is one of those considerations. The Indian federal union can obviously not afford a defense establishment, commensurate with its responsibilities, for some years to come. The ability instantly to call upon Commonwealth assets, such as the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force, would constitute a physical bulwark for a government that might otherwise be subjected to a considerable degree of external pressure.

Similarly, it is likely that a federal union in India, affiliated with the British Commonwealth, would find its financial position more advantageous than would an independent Indian nation. Its borrowing power, for example, would be considerably larger and, in addition, it would enjoy the advantage of attracting investment to a somewhat higher degree. In the next decade India will need capital for a large variety of enterprises. Some of that capital would be forthcoming under any conditions. Some of it would probably be more readily available if the entire investing world were convinced that there was a stability in Indian political structures such as that suggested by the Commonwealth association.

The British Government has made this particular point an issue for the Indians themselves freely to decide. It has been made clear, abundantly and repeatedly, that the judgment of the ultimate external relationship of the Indian union is the province of Indians only. The motive behind this British point of view is, undoubtedly, the desire to convince Indians that there is no false front in British proposals. Some Britons undoubtedly will be well satisfied if the Indian union decides that its permanent place should be outside the British structures. Others, no doubt, will feel that the advantages accruing to the United Kingdom from a better strategic position in the Far East and from the opportunities for trade on an advantageous basis make it desirable that an Indian union should be the next great British Commonwealth. The eventual debate on this issue, however, has already been taken out of British hands. The Indians can and must make their own decision. They may make it, not on the basis of political or military advantage, but on the basis of emotional satisfaction. And the British have already indicated that whichever way the decision is made they will have no quarrel with it.

---

## IX. THE FURTHER ATTEMPT

---

THE FACTORS THAT HAVE BEEN OUTLINED THUS FAR AS OBVIOUSLY NECESSARY to any effective compromise of the Indian points of view must have been in the minds of the British Cabinet mission. These men were sent out to India to find the basis for a solution of communal differences and they had committed themselves and their Government to stay with this job until some form of solution had been approximated.

They arrived in India late in March in 1946 and they made it plain that their reference from the House of Commons went beyond any specific commitments that had been made prior to that time. They were prepared to undertake an exploratory job, to entertain all points of view and to act, if necessary, in the capacity of mediators and honest brokers. They made it plain at the outset that any constitutional change would necessarily have to be referred to the House of Commons for ultimate approval but that within that limitation they enjoyed wide authority to hear, advise and recommend.

An important part of that work in India was that played by the Viceroy. Lord Wavell was not a member of the mission itself but he was immediately joined with it in all of its discussions in India. There were three reasons for this. First, the Viceroy had comprehensive on-the-ground knowledge of the problems that were faced and had the facilities through which he could make that knowledge available in organized form. Second, he enjoyed the confidence of individual Indian leaders. In spite of the failure of the Simla Conference of the previous year, Lord Wavell's stature had been unimpaired. He was regarded as honest and forthright. Third, the participation of the Viceroy was imperative in the formation of an interim government because it was upon the Viceroy that the responsibility for appointments would devolve. It was his Executive Council that had to be made up. He was to choose, in effect, the Indian leaders who would work with him.

The four men, therefore, set to work from the beginning at the business of hearing cases stated and argued. They met deputations and leaders from the principal political parties and from the minority groups. They read extensive reports and memoranda. They heard complaints.

After some weeks of this process it became apparent that there was still a wide gulf fixed between the proclaimed positions of the major political parties. A quick resolution of the differences was not possible. The mission therefore extended to the leaders of the two principal groups, the Congress party and the Muslim League, an invitation to meet with it at the Hill Station of Simla in a Round Table discussion to see what ground could be found for a composition of differences.

After some delay and debate on whether or not this invitation should be accepted, the Simla Round Table began on April 25. It lasted for nine days. The very fact that opposing political leaders had agreed to meet was, in itself, greeted as a very considerable advance and as a sign of some lowering of the storm signals in the disturbed political climate. Gandhi was not a member of the Congress party's delegation, but he went to Simla along with the others and he consulted with members of the British mission and conferred daily with the Congress party representatives. He also held his routine evening prayer meetings for the benefit of the general public.

This Round Table Conference was technically another failure. Each party indicated its unwillingness to retreat from its originally declared position, and while there were indications in the course of the meetings themselves of an earnest effort to reach a common ground and a relatively high degree of real give and take, there was, outside the conference, an even sharper delineation of the differences that separated the groups. The Congress party became, if anything, more insistent upon strong government at the center, and the Muslim League more intransigent in its demand for Pakistan. Eventually it was agreed that no meeting of minds had been reached and that one, apparently, could not be reached. So the three parties to the Conference went their separate ways.

But the case was not yet closed. The British Government had stated that it was determined to find the ground for an Indian union. The Cabinet mission had stated that it proposed to remain in India until such a ground

had been reached. Accordingly, with the approval of the two major parties involved, the Cabinet mission returned to Delhi and, working with the Viceroy, formulated its own proposal for a compromise between the different points of view that it had entertained.

#### CHARACTER OF PROPOSAL

The precise character of this proposal should be noted. It was not suggested that this was a solution that His Majesty's Government proposed to impose upon India. It was not an arbitral award. It was not a legal judgment. It was not the draft of a constitution

It was, on the other hand, the considered judgment of a group of honest and earnest students of India's problems who had had an unusual opportunity to hear all sides of the case presented and argued. This fact, in itself, gave the proposal an unusual weight in India. It was not a position advanced as a part of the game of bargaining. It was not something that the Indians were asked to take or leave. It was not an ultimatum. It was a plan of operation inspired by a consideration of both sides of the case, and it emanated from men who were committed to neither.

Emphasis is given to this point because one of the largest advances in the whole unhappy story of British-Indian negotiation was marked in the fact that this proposal was greeted by all major Indian groups as obviously sincere, obviously in earnest and obviously genuine. This had not been the case in the previous discussions, wherein every proposal had been examined for its presumably concealed purpose.

The mission's proposal was unequivocal on the subject of Pakistan.

[The text of the Cabinet mission's proposals appears as an appendix to this book ]

The permanent partition of India, it declared, was not merely unacceptable but unthinkable. The solid, closely reasoned basis for the rejection of this plan was set forth in some detail. The mission declared that considerations of external security, of the strength of a federal union, and of the position of minorities within the designated areas in India made it impossible to consider as a constitutional process the substitution of two Indias for one. The mission was trying to find the basis for an Indian union, not an Indian division, and the acceptance of Pakistan would have

been in itself a contradiction in terms. The text of their proposal showed a considerable sympathy for the background out of which the Pakistan demand had arisen, but to the demand itself the mission could not and did not agree. Its proposal, therefore, was for a single Indian federation and a single constitution-making body to draft the organic law for that federation. It proposed, likewise, a single empowered interim Indian government to function in the Executive branch during the time that India moved into new political structures.

Once that principle had been established, however, the mission undertook an extensive compromise with the idea of a powerful and highly centralized state. The authority of the federal union was to emanate from a sharply designated delegation of powers. Those powers were to be operative only in the fields of external affairs, defense, communication and the acquisition of the necessary revenue for carrying out these functions. The mission made it plain that other powers could be assigned to the federation subsequently by its constituent units. But in the beginning they proposed that the delegated sovereign powers should be closely restricted. All other powers were to be residual within the constituent units.

The proposal thus asked for a substantial compromise of the Hindu demand for a powerful and highly-centralized government. It proposed the substitution for such a regime of a limited federal union operating only in those fields that constituted an irreducible minimum for one government of India.

#### DIVISION OF GROUPS

The original reservation of powers to the constituent units within the federation did not in itself meet the demand for a sovereign Muslim state, so the mission went a step further. It proposed that the units within the federation that were part of British India should be divided into two groups. One of these groups would be the principal Hindu area. The second would be those five Provinces and one administrative district that had a majority Muslim population. This was the area originally demanded as Pakistan by the Muslim League. The proposal suggested that that area could come into a federation as either one group or two, functioning, in effect, as a federation within a federation. The Provinces so named were

Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier and the administrative district of Baluchistan in the northwest and the Provinces of Bengal and Assam in the northeast.

Within the areas so divided the constituent units might, in turn, delegate powers to the group or reserve them to the Provinces.

An attempt to meet the difficulty of Hindu predominance at the center was made in the provision that communal issues would require a special type of approval. Not only would they require a majority of the central body sitting as a whole, but they would require the majority approval of each community within that body. In this way a presumptive double safeguard would be set up against the overriding of one group by the other on a communal basis. The decision as to whether or not a question was communal was to be placed in the hands of the judiciary.

These were the proposals that undertook to meet the major aspects of conflict between Muslims and Hindus. The Muslims were asked to concede that there must be one Indian union. The Hindus were asked to concede that there could be a grouping of essentially Muslim states to which large powers would be reserved.

The issue of the place of Indian India in the federation was left largely to further negotiation and discussion. It was stipulated that the Princely States should be represented in the constitution-making body in proportion to their population. It was presumed that they would give accession to the federation as the paramount power and that their subsequent relations to this new paramount power would be worked out by negotiation in the interim period.

These phases of the proposal dealt with the future government of India and the constitution-making body that was to determine its form and content. In addition to that the mission made specific proposals for the formation of an Indian interim government. It suggested that the Viceroy's Executive Council should henceforth be composed entirely of Indians and that those Indians should be drawn from leaders of the major political parties. Legislation had already been introduced in the British Parliament to make this legally possible, and it was suggested that there was no essential obstacle to the formation of a strong and representative government at the center within a relatively short period of time.

The mission then went on in detail to outline the precise mode by

which members of the constituent assembly could be chosen and the representation that could be given to each community in such an assembly. It then expressed the hope that these proposals would be used as the framework within which constitutional changes could be made and that they would be accepted by the various Indian groups.

## RECEPTION SERIOUS

The reception that was accorded to this proposal was more serious and thoughtful than had been the case under previous circumstances. There was only one sharp and immediate objection to it. That came within twenty-four hours from the Sikh community. In the plan of grouping, as it had been suggested, the Sikh community was automatically bracketed into the Provinces that constituted the Muslim group. The Sikhs promptly objected to this as a disposition of their political status that was much against their will. In their objection, however, they did not revert to previous threats of violence but stated, rather, that they would petition His Majesty's Government for further safeguards of their peculiar position. They did not indicate that their opposition, however strong, would be a permanent obstacle to the adoption of a plan. They did suggest, however, that their representations had not been taken adequately into account and that some further consideration must be given to the justice of their special place. Later they announced the calling of a special defense force to protect their interests.

The Congress party and the Muslim League both took the proposal under very sober advisement. After about a week in Simla, Mr. Jinnah came down to Delhi, again met with the Viceroy and members of the mission and then issued a short statement in which he said that further study would be required and that some clarification was needed on some points. This was followed two days later by a statement from the Working Committee of the Congress party in which also some further clarification was asked.

There were several points on which the political parties wanted an even more concrete definition. Most of these questions came from the Congress party, but presumably the Muslim League concurred in wanting some positions declared beyond the chance of dispute.

A first issue was that of the actual sovereign position of the interim

government and the constitution-making body. It will be recalled that the Congress party had repeatedly declared that sovereignty must be positively transferred before any constitutional changes could be brought about. Consequently the questions were asked:

"Will His Majesty's Government recognize the constitution-making body as a sovereign assembly?" "Will the interim executive be fully responsible to either the constituent assembly or the legislature?" This meant, of course, "Will there be fundamental limitation on the veto power of the Viceroy?"

This question may have had more to do with the position of Gandhi in relation to the whole problem than appeared on the surface. It had been Gandhi's lifelong contention that the transfer of sovereignty was the first, and indeed the only essential step in effecting constitutional change in India. It was therefore a serious question in the minds of all observers whether Gandhi could and would destroy these proposals, as he had destroyed previous attempts at compromise, on the basis of this one question.

#### POSITION OF GANDHI

The position of Gandhi in respect to these whole negotiations was a peculiar one. Gandhi was nominally not a member of the Congress party and insisted vociferously that he appeared in the entire discussion only as *amicus curiae*. Yet the pages of Gandhi's publication, *Harijan*, were closely scanned week after week to see what he would have to say about the negotiations and to determine, in effect, whether the proposal would be accepted or rejected. The implication here was greater than Gandhi's relation to the problem and to the party. The acceptance of the British proposals could mean, finally, that Gandhi would bow himself out of the Indian political scene. Gandhi would not be a member of the constituent assembly. That was obvious. He would not be a member of the Viceroy's Council. That was equally obvious. He was not a member of the Congress party. If the proposal were put into effect, India's political course would be directed into a series of steps over which Gandhi no longer had any control. So long as India refused to accept a settlement, Gandhi was the acknowledged leader of the permanent rebellion against the British *Raj*. If a settlement were accepted, Gandhi ceased to be a political figure of consequence and became a superannuated saint. Theoretically he had occupied



only this role for fifteen years. In practice everyone in India knew that it was his shrewd hand that pulled the strings. Whether or not he would accept a basic change in his fundamental relationship to the whole problem of India was one of the major questions at issue.

There was another sharp issue in which Pandit Nehru was involved. This was the question of how the delegates from the Princely States would be chosen. Nehru was the President of the so-called People's Conference of the Indian States. It was his declared position that popular representation was necessary in these principalities before India could make any progress toward real democracy and union. During the actual time that these proposals were under discussion, Pandit Nehru defied an order from the Princely State of Faridkot and went directly into the State to organize mass meetings in favor of popular government. It will be remembered that one of the reasons given by the Congress party for the rejection of the 1942 proposals was that the method of choosing the delegates from the Princely States was undemocratic and unsatisfactory. Consequently, the mission was asked to clarify this point also.

A further question of importance was whether or not His Majesty's Government proposed to retain British troops in India during the period of the interim government. This might, as we have noted, easily become a matter of enormous domestic importance in the case of violent non-accession on the part of any Indian group. Both parties wanted to know, at this point, whether or not there would be soldiery at hand to make the decisions good if either side attempted to welch on the agreement that had been reached. Naturally it was not put forward in this light. The question of troops was advanced in connection of the issue of sovereignty.

Finally the question of the position of the various sub-units within the divided groups was a matter of importance. The Congress party had functioning ministries in Assam, Sind and the North-West Frontier Province. Yet these Provinces were assigned arbitrarily to the Muslim group by the proposal. Consequently it was asked if it would not be possible for individual Provincial units to opt out of the group designated before the constituent assembly was brought together.

These questions were not hair-splitting. They were vital issues involved. The members of the Cabinet mission obviously thought that they had all been clarified adequately in the original proposal, but it was ap-

parent that the Indian political parties felt that some further declaration was needed. Accordingly, on May 25, the Cabinet mission and the Viceroy issued the following statement.

1. The Delegation have considered the statement of the President of the Muslim League dated 22nd May and the Resolution dated 24th May of the Working Committee of the Congress.

2. The position is that since the Indian leaders, after prolonged discussion, failed to arrive at an agreement, the Delegation put forward their recommendations as the nearest approach to reconciling the views of the two main parties. The scheme stands as a whole and can only succeed if it is accepted and worked in a spirit of co-operation.

3. The Delegation wish also to refer briefly to a few points that have been raised in the statement and resolution.

4. The authority and the functions of the Constituent Assembly, and the procedure which it is intended to follow are clear from the Cabinet Delegation's statement. Once the Constituent Assembly is formed and working on this basis, there is no intention of interfering with its discretion of questioning its decisions. When the Constituent Assembly has completed its labours, His Majesty's Government will recommend to Parliament such action as may be necessary for the cession of sovereignty to the Indian people, subject only to two matters which are mentioned in the statement and which we believe are not controversial, namely adequate provision for the protection of the minorities (paragraph 20 of the Statement) and willingness to conclude a treaty with His Majesty's Government to cover matters arising out of the transfer of power (paragraph 22 of the Statement).

5. It is a consequence of the system of election that a few Europeans can be elected to the Constituent Assembly. Whether the right so given will be exercised is a matter for them to decide.

6. The representative of Baluchistan will be elected in a joint meeting of the Shahi Jirga and the non-official members of the Quetta Municipality.

7. In Coorg the whole Legislative Council will have the right to vote, but the official members will receive instructions not to take part in the election.

8. The interpretation put by the Congress resolution on paragraph 15 of the Statement to the effect that the Provinces can in the first instance make the choice whether or not to belong to the section in which they are placed does not accord with the Delegation's intentions. The reasons for the grouping of the Provinces are well known and this is an essential feature of the scheme and can only be modified by agreement between the parties. The right to opt out of the Groups after the constitution-making has been completed will be exercised by the people themselves, since at the first election under the new Provincial constitution this question of opting out will obviously be a major issue and all those entitled to vote under the new franchise will be able to take their share in a truly democratic decision.

9. The question of how the States representatives should be appointed to the

Constituent Assembly is clearly one which must be discussed with the States. It is not a matter for decision by the Delegation.

10. It is agreed that the Interim Government will have a new basis. That basis is that all portfolios, including that of the War Member, will be held by Indians; and that the Members will be selected in consultation with the Indian political parties. These are very significant changes in the Government of India, and a long step towards independence. His Majesty's Government will recognize the effect of these changes, will attach the fullest weight to them, and will give to the Indian Government the greatest possible freedom in the exercise of the day-to-day administration of India.

11. As the Congress statement recognizes, the present Constitution must continue during the interim period; and the Interim Government cannot therefore be made legally responsible to the Central Legislature. There is, however, nothing to prevent the Members of the Government, individually or by common consent, from resigning, if they fail to pass an important measure through the Legislature, or if a vote of nonconfidence is passed against them.

12. There is of course no intention of retaining British troops in India against the wish of an independent India under the new Constitution, but during the interim period, which it is hoped will be short, the British Parliament has, under the present constitution, the ultimate responsibility for the security of India and it is necessary therefore that British troops should remain.

While the mission intimated that its previous position and proposals had been sufficiently clear that no additional statement was required, this declaration of May 25 did actually clarify several points that were at issue.

#### PUT FORWARD AS A WHOLE

One matter of very considerable consequence was the statement that the mission regarded its proposal as a unit and that the plan should be accepted or rejected as a whole. This was somewhat less abrupt than the statement that Sir Stafford had made in 1942 to the effect that the Indians could take or leave the War Cabinet proposals. It did indicate, nevertheless, that the mission was not in the business of bargaining. This was a strong position on the part of the mission. The proposals, however, had two parts. One of them dealt with a program for the formation of a strong interim government. By suggesting that the proposal was an indissoluble whole, the mission made it doubly vulnerable. It was obviously the considered judgment of the Cabinet members and the Viceroy that a successful constituent assembly could not be called unless a successful representative central government were functioning. Nevertheless this position

made it possible for Indian political parties to examine the proposal, not merely in the light of a future Indian union, but also in the light of the immediate composition of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

The remainder of the May 25 statement answered specifically the questions that had been raised. It declared quite plainly that sovereignty would not be transferred in the interim period. This was a flat rejection of the Congress party's thesis that a change in sovereign status should precede the framing of a constitution. Nevertheless, within that limit the mission expressed the feeling that the Indian Government at the center should have the widest possible latitude and that this government might resign if it were opposed by a majority in the legislative assembly. This again is the type of proposal that is dependent upon good faith and good will for its satisfactory execution.

The actual transfer of sovereignty was made to be contingent upon the negotiation of treaty. Again extraordinarily wide latitude was indicated. The treaty should include requisite measures for the protection of minorities and an agreed basis for the protection of British rights and interests in the course of the transfer. Aside from these two elements, no strictures were put upon the constituent assembly. Once more it was reaffirmed that when such a treaty came into existence the basis would have been laid for a transfer of sovereignty. The transfer of sovereignty, it was made plain, would necessarily have to be an act of the British Parliament.

This statement also clarified the British position on the question of how the Indian States were to choose their representatives. It was the position of the mission that this was a function to be determined solely and wholly by the States themselves. This meant that His Majesty's Government did not propose to suggest any necessary constitutional revolutions within the States themselves as a condition precedent to their participation in an Indian union.

#### RETENTION OF TROOPS

Finally this statement clarified the precise position of His Majesty's Government on the retention of troops in India during the interim period. It was to continue to be the policy of His Majesty's Government to retain armed forces wherever responsibility for the maintenance of order and for defense continued. The interim government, not being a sover-

eign state, would not enjoy that ultimate responsibility. Until sovereignty was transferred, that responsibility was a function of His Majesty's Government in India. It was made plain that there was no intention to retain British troops in an independent union. But it was made equally plain that there was no intention of withdrawing the implementing arm until the union had been achieved and its sovereignty recognized.

This declaration, in turn, was taken up for discussion by the major Indian political parties. The Sikh position had already been made clear. It was taken for granted that the Sikhs would oppose the terms of the settlement and that some further compromise might be reached in their behalf, but that their non-agreement would not be a permanent obstacle to the union. The real problem, it was felt, was whether or not the proposals would be accepted by the Muslim League. The original reception accorded to the proposal by Mr. Jinnah had been relatively cool. In the period of waiting and discussion, moreover, there had been numerous declarations by lesser Muslim leaders that no proposal would be acceptable that fell short of outright partition.

Apprehension grew when the Muslim League Working Committee met on the 7th of June and heard Mr. Jinnah declare that the proposal was not in accord with Muslim expectations. Nevertheless, he declared, he would not impose his opinion upon the body that he headed but would leave it to the Working Committee and the General Assembly of the League to determine whether or not the proposal was acceptable.

#### THE MUSLIMS ACCEPT

The following day, June 8, the Muslim League voted unanimously to accept the proposal. Mr. Jinnah declared that Pakistan had been conceded in principle in the formation of the separate Muslim groups within the federation and that within the framework that had been set out the Muslims could continue to pursue their course toward a sovereign state within India. He was somewhat derisive in regard to the Hindus. It was taken for granted, in the Muslim camp, that the Congress party was quite willing to accept the proposal and some of the essentially favorable statements of the Hindus were recalled. Mr. Jinnah declared, however, that the Hindus would find, in time, that the plan as set forth was a "sugar-coated pill."

Part of this reaction can probably be attributed to simple face-saving. Regardless of what Mr. Jinnah said, the British proposal was considerably short of Pakistan and Mr. Jinnah and everyone else in India knew it. It did, however, make substantial concessions to the Muslim minority as a minority that could be depended upon to safeguard their interests. The only way, however, in which it could be made acceptable, from the Muslim League point of view, was the declaration that Pakistan had been conceded in fact if not in name.

Part of the Muslim League's favorable reaction was undoubtedly based also, in part, on the belief that in the interim government the Muslims would enjoy outright parity with the Hindus. The proposal had said, merely, that the legitimate claims of all parties would be taken into consideration and that the Viceroy would undertake to make his Council as broadly representative as possible. The word was passed around in Muslim League circles, however, that the plan had already been formulated. The Council was made up of twelve members. It was suggested that five would be chosen from the Congress party, five from the Muslim League, one from the Sikhs and one from the Indian Christians or Anglo-Indians. This would give neither the Congress party nor the Muslim League an outright majority on the Council, but would give the two parties parity.

One other suggestion was made, off the record, of something else that might have influenced the Muslim attitude. It was widely believed in India at the time that the Viceroy and members of the mission had taken Mr. Jinnah aside privately and advised him, most strongly, to accept the proposals since they were likely to be the most favorable that he would ever have an opportunity to consider. There is, naturally, no official record of such advice, but it was well known that the mission felt that it had made as many concessions to the Muslim minority as could possibly be made, consistently with good government. The Muslim League, indeed, was at a dead end. There was nothing more that it could gain. If the proposals were rejected by the Muslim League, it had no alternative but to resort to force, and Mr. Jinnah and his followers were convinced that such resort would be futile and fatal.

Thus, one of the largest objections to the proposal was met and one of the largest obstacles overcome. There was a sigh of relief throughout India. A plane left India for England to bring home two members of

the mission, while Sir Stafford, who had been ill, announced that he would return by ship, sailing from Bombay on June 14.

#### THE PRINCES ACCEDE

Within twenty-four hours of the acceptance of the proposal by the Muslim League, another important group announced its accession. The Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes, meeting in Bombay, adopted a resolution declaring that the proposals were satisfactory and that while many details remained to be worked out in negotiation, it proposed to go forward within the framework of this plan.

The Standing Committee, however, decided that first the proposals should be discussed by the States' Constitutional Advisory Committee, whose decision would again be considered by the Standing Committee of the Chamber. The Advisory Committee's decision was also favorable, and on June 10 the Chamber of Princes gave its formal approval to the plan. The Chamber went beyond the actual accession required, indeed, and declared that the Chamber and the Princes would consider "ways and means of speeding up constitutional reforms in the States and of bringing the administration in the States up to the highest level as quickly as possible."

Another important hurdle had been passed. The attitude of the Princes throughout the entire negotiation was a source of great satisfaction to the mission and to the Government of India.

#### THE CONGRESS PARTY DEBATES

There remained the Congress party to be considered. The meetings of its Working Committee were scheduled to take place during the second week in June. Prior to those meetings, the individual expressions of members of the Congress party had been largely favorable to the plan. Gandhi had indicated that he favored its acceptance in a general sort of way. There was no official commitment to the proposal, but it was widely understood that the Congress party had already submitted its nominees to the Viceroy for his interim government and the party had even gone so far as to explain why some members would not be on its recommended list.

When the Working Committee settled down to take up the plan in detail, however, one important difficulty arose. The plan, as we have

pointed out, was a dual one. It provided not only for the formation of a constituent assembly, but for the formation of an interim government. When it came to the problem of an interim government, the Congress party was faced with a definition of parity that could put the party at a considerable disadvantage.

The accepted thesis, as we have pointed out, was that the Congress party should have five members and that the Muslim League should have five members, with the other two belonging to neither. The Congress party, however, was in a peculiar position. It had gone before the public and before the world for a number of years as being representative of all communities and all bodies of thought in India. Its President, for a considerable period, had been very conspicuously a Muslim. There had been innumerable denials also that the party was, in any sense, a Hindu party. It was repeatedly affirmed that the party was noncommunal. Consequently, the only logical course of action in this choice of nominees for the Viceroy's Council would be to put into office at least one Congress party Muslim as representative of that presumptive wing of the party. Such a course of action, however, would immediately upset the balance in the Council itself and, on a basis of communal division instead of party division, give the Muslims six seats on the Council and the Hindus four. This was completely unacceptable to those members of the Congress party's Working Committee who were peculiarly conscious of their Hindu character. Accordingly, they demanded that the Congress party be represented by not less than seven members out of the twelve on the Council so that, in any event, the party would have an outright majority. Then, even if one member of the Council derived from the Congress party were also a Muslim, the Hindu community would have not less than half the Council. Thus once more the basic issue of communal division and of parity in representation provided a major impediment to understanding.

#### CONDITIONING FOR FAILURE

Gandhi, meanwhile, had begun the process of conditioning the Indian public for the possible failure of the negotiations. At one stage he wrote in his magazine that the issue was now in the hands of God, and that even if the mission failed it would not be particularly serious since, after all, there was no reason why Hindus and Muslims should not compose their



differences without the aid of an outside party. The storm signals began to go up again.

On June 11, after two days of almost continuous discussion, the Congress party's Working Committee sent Gandhi to the Viceroy with a draft of its "final demands." There were four of these:

First, the Congress party asked for an assurance of an outright majority on the Viceroy's Executive Council. Second, the Congress party asked an assurance that no Europeans, who might represent small constituencies, should have a vote in the constitution-making body. Third, the Congress party insisted that any Province should have the right to opt out of the group into which it had been placed by the proposals, prior to the calling of the constituent assembly. Fourth, the Congress party insisted upon a pledge of the recognition of the sovereign status of the constitution-making body itself.

Gandhi then addressed his prayer meeting once more and said:

"We are exploring every avenue to avoid a breakdown. If a breakdown were contemplated, it would have appeared long ago. If the negotiations break down, it is God's will. We did all we could."

What the Congress party had done, however, was to re-introduce issues upon which a decision had already been reached and to raise questions that made a compromise impossible. Some persons may be forgiven if they thought it was not God's will, but Gandhi's.

We have observed that the mission's proposal was not an ultimatum from His Majesty's Government to the Indian political parties. It was a suggestion for a basis of agreement. The Muslim League had already accepted it. If, after that had taken place the mission modified its basic proposal, the withdrawal of the Muslim League's acceptance would be inevitable and the negotiations would have to start all over again. The Muslim League presumably had agreed to the interim government, with the understanding that parity in some form would be granted. The Congress party's demand would, of course, remove automatically the basis for Muslim accession on any such ground.

Similarly the mission had made it plain that the proposal, as it stood, was a possibility for grouping within the constituent assembly. After a constitution was drafted that grouping might be changed by the wish of Indians themselves. Prior to the constitution, however, a basis of agree-

ment had to be established, and this was it. The Congress party's demand, on the other hand, that units should be able to opt out of their groupings prior to the forming of the assembly would inevitably make any agreement in respect to the character of the assembly invalid. The Muslims had already agreed to come into the plan on the basis of the groupings. The Congress party thereupon demanded that the whole basis for the groupings be changed. Obviously, the agreement to this Congress party proposal would also have met a reversal of the position of the Muslim League.

On the question of European representation in some of the smaller constituencies (particularly in Assam where Europeans had been returned without opposition), there was no insuperable difficulty. In its statement of May 25 the mission had made it plain that the decision as to European representation would be made by the individuals themselves. If this were the only obstacle, it could easily be met.

#### THE ISSUE OF SOVEREIGNTY

Finally, the Congress party demands went back to the original position that there must be a transfer of sovereignty before a constitution was drafted. A prior pledge to recognize the sovereignty of the constituent assembly was, in the Congress view, essential to such an assembly.

It is extremely difficult to believe that the Congress party leaders' demand on this point had a solitary vestige of sincerity in it. The British Government had taken the position, for more than twenty years, that a union must be formed under a constitution before sovereignty could be transferred to it. That position had been repeatedly reaffirmed. As recently as the May 25 statement, the mission had made it plain that the steps involved in the transfer of sovereignty presupposed the formation of a constitutional union and the conclusion of a treaty with His Majesty's Government. The Congress party demand, on the other hand, went back to the "Quit India" proposal and suggested that sovereignty could be transferred before a government was set up that would or could be its recipient.

The Congress party leaders must have known in advance that such a suggestion was not acceptable to the British Government and that it modified from the beginning the whole basis upon which the formation of an

interim government and the construction of a constitution was contemplated. Putting that forward as a "demand" at the last moment was an open invitation to deadlock and failure. It was asking what the Congress party knew would not be granted.

By this time Gandhi had gone somewhat further. He had explained to his followers that the real reason for so much urgency in the matter was the fact that the Cabinet mission was committed to reach a settlement.

If they failed to do so, he declared, they would never be able to live down their disgrace. Consequently, he said, the Congress party was making every effort and exhausting every possibility to save the situation for them.

This, in itself, was an obvious warning that Gandhi was fully prepared for the failure of the negotiations and that he had already marked out the sacrificial victim. It was not the Indian parties who had failed. It was not the Congress party that had refused to compromise. It was the poor long-suffering Cabinet mission that would be obliged to go home in disgrace.

At this stage of the negotiation, there was so strong a reminiscence of 1942 that it seemed impossible that the similarity was entirely coincidence. Once more attention was being deflected from the major issue at stake, that is, whether or not India would achieve a constitutional union, to points at which the Congress party declared a compromise was impossible. It was therefore extremely difficult for persons outside of the fury of the exchange to believe that a genuine compromise had been intended by the Congress party. There was no losing sight of the fact that as long as it was generally supposed that the Muslim League would reject the proposals the attitude of Gandhi and the Congress party was favorable to them. Once the Muslim League had accepted them, the Congress party found barriers that had not been discovered prior to that time.

The proposal was, after all, British. And Gandhi had asked:  
"Can any good come out of Britain?"

#### NO FORMAL DISAPPROVAL

Toward the close of the week, Dr. Azad informed the Viceroy that the proposals were not acceptable but there was still no formal resolution of disapproval by the Congress party.

It was left for the Viceroy to announce that this phase of the negotiations had failed. On the subsequent Sunday, June 16, the Viceroy made public a statement from the members of the mission and himself in which he declared that there was no profit to be had in further continuation of the fruitless discussion, and therefore he was proceeding to take action. That action consisted in extending invitations to Indians of outstanding political stature to join his Executive Council. The statement of the Viceroy and the mission read as follows:

The Viceroy for some time has been exploring the possibilities of forming a coalition government drawn from the two major parties and from certain minorities. Discussions have revealed the difficulties which exist for the two major parties in arriving at any agreed basis for the formation of such a government. The Viceroy and Cabinet mission appreciate these difficulties and the efforts which the two main parties have made to meet them. They consider, however, that no useful purpose can be served by further prolonging these discussions. It is indeed urgently necessary that a strong and representative interim government should be set up to conduct the very heavy and important business that has to be carried through.

The Viceroy is now issuing an invitation to the following to serve as interim government members on the basis that the constitution-making shall proceed in accordance with the May 16 statement; Sirdar Baldev Singh, Dr. John Mathai, Jagjivan Ram, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, H. K. Mahtab, Nawab Mohammed Ismail Khan, Sir Nazimuddin Khwaja, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, C. Rajagopalacharia, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Sir N. P. Engineer.

If any of these is unable for personal reasons to accept, the Viceroy will, after consultation, invite some other person in his place. The Viceroy will arrange the distribution of portfolios in consultation with the two main party leaders.

The above composition of an interim government is in no way to be taken as a precedent for the solution of any other communal question. It is an expedient put forward to solve the present difficulty only and to obtain the best available coalition government.

The Viceroy and Cabinet mission believe that Indians of all communities desire to arrive at a speedy settlement of this matter so that the process of constitution-making can go forward and that the government of India may be carried on as efficiently as possible in the meantime.

They therefore hope that all parties, especially the two major parties, will accept the proposal so as to overcome the present obstacles and will co-operate for the successful carrying on of the interim government. Should this proposal be accepted the Viceroy will aim at inaugurating the new government about June 26.

In the event of the major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a coalition government on the above lines, it is planned to

proceed with the formation of an interim government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the British Cabinet mission's statement of May 16. The Viceroy is also directing the Governors of the Provinces to summon the Provincial legislative assemblies forthwith to proceed with the elections necessary for the setting up of constitution-making machinery as put forward in the May 16 statement.

At the same time the Viceroy forwarded to the heads of the Congress party and the Muslim League identical letters urging upon them the desirability of accepting the nominations that he had made. That letter was couched in these conciliatory terms:

The Cabinet Ministers and I are fully aware of the difficulties that have prevented agreement on the composition of an interim government. We are unwilling to abandon our hope of a working partnership between the two major parties and the representatives of the minorities.

We have therefore done our best to arrive at a practical arrangement, taking into consideration the various conflicting claims and the need for obtaining a government of capable and representative administrators.

We hope the parties will now take their share in the administration of the country on the basis outlined in our new statement. We are sure we can rely on you and your Working Committee to look to the wider issues and to the urgent needs of the country as a whole and to consider this proposal in a spirit of accommodation.

It will be observed that the statement of the mission and the Viceroy did not mention the issue of parity. The names of the nominees, however, were sufficient to raise and to clarify that issue for the Indian political parties. Five of the nominees, Nehru, Patel, Rajagopalacharia, Prasad and Mahtab were members of the Congress party. Five were members of the Muslim League. They were Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, Nishtar, Ismail Khan and Nazimuddin. Here, at least, was nominal parity between the two principal parties. Moreover, neither one had an outright majority in the Council of fourteen. The other members represented the small minorities. Baldev Singh was a Sikh and Minister of Development in the Punjab. Dr John Matthai, one of the directors of the Tata industrial interests, was an Indian Christian. Jagjivan Ram, an Untouchable, was president of the Depressed Classes League, and Sir N. P. Engineer was a Parsi.

In actual point of fact, as political observers were very quick to point out, the parity involved was somewhat more apparent than real. Mr. Ram, representing the Untouchables, was closely associated with the

Congress party and sympathetic toward it. He had been elected through Congress party support and represented a group among the Untouchables opposed to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who was a more conspicuous leader and opposed to the Congress party. So on the basis of Hinduism alone, there were six members in the Council as opposed to five Muslims. On political matters it was also regarded as likely that the Sikh member would vote with the Congress party and this would give the Hindu group a working majority in the Council.

There were several very significant things in the statement, however, that went beyond this question of parity. This was the first time in India's history that an all-Indian Council had been nominated. It was also the first time in India's history that the outstanding members of the political parties were asked to form a government. Here, at last, were men who were real leaders in India's own internal organization. Pandit Nehru was the president-elect of the Congress party. He was regarded by many persons as the most outstandingly gifted Indian political leader and the natural candidate for the position of First Minister. The Viceroy also nominated the Secretary of the Congress party, Sardar Patel, who had long been known as the "iron man" in the Working Committee. Sardar Patel also was closely in touch with Gandhi and so this entire wing of Congress party thought was represented by its chief spokesman. Associated with Sardar Patel in many of the Congress party activities, and also a member of the Working Committee, was a man who had long been an outstanding "irreconcilable," Mr. Prasad. What the Viceroy had done, therefore, was to take the real central core of strength from the Congress party's Working Committee and asked it to come into his Council. The other Congress party nominees were no less distinguished. Mr. Rajagopalacharia was a former Premier of Madras Province and a former president of the Congress party. He was a man of enormous ability and widely heralded integrity. Mr. Mahtab was one of the younger members in the party and in the most recent Provincial elections had been returned from the Province of Orissa where he served as Premier.

The Muslim League nominees were also conspicuous figures. Mr. Jinnah was the president of the party. Liaquat Ali Khan was its secretary. Sir Nazimuddin had been a Premier of Bengal. Ismail Khan had been a Minister in the Punjab. These were men of unusual political stature.

The four small minority representatives were also men who carried political weight. Baldev Singh was a Provincial Minister. Dr. Matthai was an eminent industrialist. Sir N. P. Engineer was a Government attorney and Mr. Ram had been elected as a representative of the Untouchables.

#### REPRESENTATIVE NOMINEES

Thus the Viceroy had put together a list of candidates for the Council that overshadowed in significance any group that had been suggested up to that time. Here was a direct answer to the question of whether or not a "representative" Council would be formed.

Of even greater importance, however, were some of the quiet sentences in the statement from the mission and the Viceroy. It was made plain that if these nominees would not accept the posts that were offered there would be further nominations, and that a new government would be formed, in any case. Moreover, it was unostentatiously, almost casually, added that the Provincial governors were to call their legislatures into session to proceed with the choice of delegates for a constitution-making body. This was to take place, the statement pointed out, under the terms of the proposals of May 16. This was a declaration that His Majesty's Government proposed to carry out its plan of constitution-making, regardless of the acceptance or non-acceptance of the major political parties.

As matters stood, the position of the two parties had been curiously reversed. The Congress party, while accepting in theory the long-range proposals, had made strong objections to the interim plans. The Muslim League had acceded the entire program in spite of its presumptive objection to the long-range pattern and its declared intention of changing that pattern when the opportunity arose. Direct action of the Viceroy and the mission cut squarely across both of these objections and left the two parties to make an immediate decision on whether or not they would join a working government to be set up immediately. With that was the definite declaration that if they did not, the proposals that had been rejected would be carried out.

The Working Committees of the Congress party and the Muslim League were already in Delhi and thus they were in a position to take up these proposals. The Viceroy had extended his invitation to the In-

dian leaders as individuals and had made it plain that if any individual chose not to serve he would be replaced by another individual. The Congress party Working Committee, however, considered the plan on the basis of party representation.

It became apparent, almost at once, that the Muslim League did not propose to be placed a second time in the position of having accepted the proposal only to have it subsequently rejected by the Congress party. Because of the fact that the Muslim League had already committed itself to the acceptance of the proposals as a whole, which the Congress party had not, it was taken for granted that there would be relatively little difficulty in obtaining Muslim League support for the interim government. Attention, therefore, was focused on the attitude of the Congress party.

The Working Committee was quick to find some difficulties in the composition of the Council as proposed. There was immediate objection to the inclusion of Mr. Mahtab on the ground that his services were badly needed in the local political organization in Orissa Province. It was proposed, therefore, that for Mr. Mahtab the Viceroy should substitute Sarat Chandra Bose, a Bengali leader in the Congress party. This suggestion, in itself, was quite possibly designed to embarrass the British negotiators. Mr. Bose was, after all, the brother of the notorious Subhas Chandra Bose who had been an active agent on behalf of both the Germans and the Japanese. Sarat Chandra Bose was not associated with his brother's activities, *per se*, but his inclusion in the Cabinet would be enough in itself to indicate a possible change of front in the British reaction toward Subhas. Some persons who had been members of the "Indian National Army," organized by Subhas under Japanese direction, were still in detention in India and it would be manifestly difficult to bring them to trial if Sarat Chandra Bose were a member of the Executive Council.

#### MAHTAB DECLINES

Mr. Mahtab promptly cleared the way for the nomination of either Mr. Bose or some other alternative choice by declining the Viceroy's invitation. He gave "personal reasons" as his ground.

The next difficulty to arise was the old issue of whether or not the Congress party could be represented entirely by Hindus. Gandhi sug-



gested that the Viceroy's nominees should include at least one "Nationalist" Muslim. This was a group opposed to the Muslim League, which the League had soundly defeated in the elections for the General Assembly. The purpose of Gandhi's proposal was to force an admission from the Government of India that the Congress party was not a Hindu organization but that it represented all groups in India.

When this proposal was made known, Mr. Jinnah, on behalf of the Muslim League, wrote a letter to the Viceroy in which he declared that it was the Muslim League's understanding that the League and the League only would be recognized as representing the Muslims in India. This letter was subsequently made public through Muslim League channels and the Congress party promptly charged that there was a "secret" plot between the Viceroy and the Muslim League to stamp the Congress party as a strictly Hindu organization.

The third issue, once more raised by Gandhi, was the question of the right of any group to opt out of the groupings as set up in the May 16 proposals. Gandhi announced that he had received a telegram from Assam in which it was stated that in the instructions to the Provincial legislators concerning elections to the constituent assembly it had been required that candidates subscribe formally to that part of the British proposal that specifically rejected the principle of opting out in advance. Gandhi announced, rather dramatically, that this had come as a "great shock" to him and that the underlings of the British were obviously attempting to kill the proposals at their inception.

It is a little bit difficult, at this distance, to see how this could have been very much of a shock to anyone who had read the proposals or the May 25 statement. The Cabinet mission had declared and reiterated that the question of option had already been decided in their minds and that the constituent assembly should be set up along the lines of the groupings already designated. The Congress party, quite naturally, objected to this phase of the proposal, but it was implicit in the Viceroy's invitation to representative leaders to join his Government and it certainly could have been no surprise to Gandhi, or to anyone else in the Congress party.

Within a few days it was reported that there had developed a serious division of opinion in Congress party ranks. Gandhi, and presumably Sardar Patel, were prepared to reject the Viceroy's invitations, out of hand.

Pandit Nehru and, it was reported, a large majority in the Working Committee, were in favor of accepting the invitation, at least on a temporary basis. As a consequence, word went out that Gandhi was prepared to retire from the party's councils in the light of what he construed as a "rebuff" and that within a few hours the Working Committee would announce its tentative acceptance of the Viceroy's plans.

At this point a new complicating factor arose. Pandit Nehru suddenly left the deliberations of the Working Committee to make a trip to Kashmir State. He informed the Committee that it could proceed without him, and that he felt obligated to go to Kashmir.

The occasion for the trip was this: a short time previously, a Muslim leader, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, had initiated a series of demonstrations (culminating in riots) to demand the abdication of the Hindu ruler of Kashmir, Maharajah Hari Singh Bahadur. Sheikh Abdullah and some of his followers were subsequently imprisoned and faced eventual trial for sedition against the ruling house of Kashmir. Pandit Nehru announced that he would go to Kashmir for the purpose of conducting the legal defense of Sheikh Abdullah and of obtaining his release.

The Government of the Maharajah informed Pandit Nehru that he was not welcome in Kashmir for that purpose and advised him that the borders of the State would be closed to him. When Pandit Nehru reached Kohala, on the Kashmir frontier, sentries attempted to prevent his passage, but he refused to be obstructed and started on foot for Srinagar, the capital of the State. It was erroneously reported that Pandit Nehru had been wounded by a bayonet at the hands of a sentry, and sanguinary riots broke out in several cities in India. When Pandit Nehru reached a point about sixty miles inside the State, he was eventually arrested on a magistrate's order and held in custody for deportation.

The Congress party Working Committee promptly announced an indefinite suspension of its meeting until Pandit Nehru was set at liberty. Pandit Nehru himself had stated he would remain in Kashmir until he obtained permission to move about freely and to go to the capital to take up the case of Sheikh Abdullah.

Dr. Azad, the Congress party president, then sent a telegram to Pandit Nehru urging him to give up, for the time being, his mission to Kashmir and to return to New Delhi so that the Working Committee could resume

its sessions. The Kashmir Government, in the meantime, announced that it had no interest in the Pandit's detention; its only interest was in his deportation.

So after several days, Pandit Nehru boarded a plane and returned to Delhi.

#### SHIFT IN POSITION

And in the meantime the fat was in the fire. The Working Committee had changed its position. Gandhi and Sardar Patel were firmly entrenched, and the Committee was busily drafting a resolution to be submitted to the Viceroy in which the interim proposals would be rejected.

The riots in Calcutta subsided, but disorders in Madura were continuing. The political situation had reached perhaps its point of greatest deterioration since the riots of 1942.

It was quite apparent, from the strong tone of Dr. Azad's telegram, that he, like many others, was at a loss to explain Pandit Nehru's sudden trip to Kashmir. It seemed almost incomprehensible that at the most critical moment of the final negotiations on the pattern for Indian independence the president-elect of the Congress party should suddenly absent himself from the deliberations in order to invite arrest in a State where he knew he was not welcome. One correspondent called his attitude "quixotic." There were others who thought it was nothing short of irresponsible.

Whether or not, had he remained in New Delhi, Pandit Nehru would have been successful in leading the opposition to Gandhi to a point at which Gandhi would have been overridden by the Working Committee, is purely speculative. Under somewhat similar circumstances, in 1942, Pandit Nehru had eventually bowed to Gandhi's will against his own judgment. It was suggested, therefore, that his trip to Kashmir might have been simply a means of avoiding another inevitable showdown with his "spiritual master."

The tone of Gandhi's utterances and writings had, by this time, made it quite plain that he wanted no part of the British proposals and he and other Congress party members had begun to shift their position to the charge that the entire British plan had been submitted in bad faith.

In the meantime there had been some further opposition to the interim

government proposal from some of the minority groups. A very large gathering of representative Sikh associations had called upon Sardar Baldev Singh to reject the Viceroy's invitation, and it was presumed that he would feel obliged to do so.

The Untouchables, under Dr. Ambedkar, again forwarded a protest over the choice of a representative who was presumably under the Congress party's domination.

Objection came from another important quarter. The Anglo-Indian community had a convention of its political associations and protested strongly against its non-inclusion in the interim government. The Anglo-Indians had had, for a number of years, a vital place in the Executive Branch, and their non-inclusion, at this stage, was felt to be an unjust slight. Consequently, they called upon members of their community to resign from government jobs, to refuse co-operation to the new government and even to resign from the Auxiliary Forces.

It was apparent that all parties could not be satisfied by the composition of an interim Council. But it was becoming even more apparent that the major difficulty still lay with the Congress party. If the Viceroy acceded to the Congress party demands that he nominate a Nationalist Muslim, there was a strong probability that the Muslim League would refuse to come into the government. If he did not accede, the Congress party was ready to go on record rejecting the entire scheme.

On Saturday and Sunday, June 22 and 23, the Congress party Working Committee was in almost continuous session, drafting, under Gandhi's direction, its final resolution of refusal to be adopted and forwarded to the Viceroy.

But the action taken on Monday was still short of that step. A brief letter was sent to the Viceroy declaring that the interim plan was not acceptable to the Working Committee. A fuller criticism of both the interim plan and the long-range proposal was promised.

The Working Committee's rejection of the invitation, however, was unequivocal. The Congress party did not propose to participate in the interim government along the lines that had been indicated by the Viceroy.

Once more the political thermometer fell to below zero. The Viceroy and the mission called in leaders of the Congress party and of the



Muslim League and a series of conferences was held throughout Monday and Tuesday.

#### LONG-RANGE PLAN ACCEPTED

On Tuesday afternoon, with an unexpected abruptness after so many delays, the entire ostensible position of the Congress party was changed. The Working Committee voted to accept the long-range part of the May 16 proposals.

A further note was dispatched to the Viceroy, stating that this action had been taken, that the Congress party reserved the right to work for its own goals in the constitution-making body and that it was prepared for a reopening of negotiation on the subject of the interim government.

The Working Committee announced that its decisions would be passed upon by the general committee of the party in the session that was called for July 6 and 7. Moreover, it added that the Prime Ministers in the Provinces that had Congress party governments had been instructed to proceed at once with the plan of conducting elections for the constituent assembly.

The Muslim League, it will be recalled, had accepted the long-range proposals three weeks previously, but had not given an answer to the Viceroy's invitation to join an interim government. Immediately the decision of the Congress party was announced, the League's Working Committee went into session, and after only ninety minutes announced that it had accepted the British plan in full—long-range and short-range—and was prepared, fully, to co-operate.

This sudden turn of events naturally focused attention on Gandhi. The rumor immediately spread throughout New Delhi that the Working Committee had overridden Gandhi's objection and that its decision had been made "in the teeth of his opposition." There was apparently enough substance behind this rumor that Gandhi felt it necessary to explain his attitude at his evening prayer meeting.

The rumor of his opposition, he stated, was unfounded. Nevertheless he made it plain that he had not supported nor acceded to the Working Committee's decision. For some days past, he explained, he had been beset with grave doubts and misgivings. Where previously he had seen the light, now, he said, he was in darkness. He could not explain the basis for

his fears, he said, but those fears had surrounded him. In consequence, according to his statement, he felt that the actions of the Committee and of the people should not be guided by his judgment when he could no longer see the light. Therefore, he said, he had urged upon the Working Committee that it make its decision quite regardless of his personal feeling and apprehension.

That this constituted a dissociation of Gandhi from the decision was quite plain. He had not accepted the proposal, but it was equally plain that once his influence was withdrawn the Working Committee was ready to do so.

In conclusion Gandhi advised the people of India to follow, for the time being the decision of the Working Committee. When the light was restored to him, he said, he would give the people an indication of that light and how it should be followed.

Whether or not this meant that at some future time Gandhi would reopen his opposition to the proposals and seek popular following to overthrow the Working Committee's decision was left to the apprehension of others.

#### NEW COMPLICATIONS

In the meantime the rather curiously divided position of the Congress party had raised new political complications. In the statement of May 25 the mission and the Viceroy had indicated that the plan, as outlined, was something of an organic whole and that it should be adopted with all of its main provisions intact. Those provisions fell into these two categories, those that dealt with the plan for making a constitution and those that dealt with the setting up of an interim government. The long-range proposals, obviously, were of the utmost importance for the whole political future of India. The interim government proposals were of considerable practical importance in putting the machinery into operation. The Muslim League had accepted both phases of the plan. The Congress party, on the other hand, had agreed to the constitutional proposal in its entirety, but had rejected that much of the plan that would set up a responsible government in the interim.

There were three courses immediately open to the Viceroy. He could accept the situation at its face value and set up an interim government

made up of those persons who had accepted his invitation, plus others who were like-minded. This would mean a Council, led by representatives of the Muslim League, and possibly with a Muslim majority. In the second place, he could reopen the whole field of interim negotiation and try, once more, to compromise the differences between the Congress party and the Muslim League on the interim Council positions. Or, finally, he could proceed with the formation of an interim government, not strictly representative of any political party, but sufficiently strong to give India a working administration while the constitution was being drafted.

The first two courses of action were obviously somewhat distasteful. The Congress party was the largest organized political group in India, and a central government could not be said to be "representative" unless the Congress party were included. The reopening of negotiations seemed fruitless since the Muslim League had already accepted the basis for the interim government and it was assumed that the League did not wish to make further concessions. Consequently, it appeared inevitable that the third course would have to be followed in one fashion or another.

The Viceroy's declaration of June 16 appeared to have taken this contingency into account. He had stated that in the event that any individual rejected his invitation to enter the Government, he would make an attempt to find some other suitable person. He had made it plain, however, that in the meantime the progress of the constitution-making machinery would not be impeded on this score alone.

Beyond this area of dispute and dissension was the further solid statement of the Viceroy that he had already instructed the Provinces to proceed with the election of their representatives to a constitution-making body. Thus, while the original declaration of the mission had suggested that the proposal ought to be accepted as a unit, the Viceroy had made it possible to avoid a breakdown of the whole plan if its interim phase proved unacceptable to one party or another.

Subsequent analysts of this situation, and writers of history, will undoubtedly spend a considerable degree of attention and effort on the allocation of credit for whatever constitutional progress will have been made in India. There will undoubtedly be an accolade for those members of the Congress party who were farsighted enough to go beyond Gandhi's misgivings and take their chances with constitutional change. There will be



praise for Mr. Jinnah's leadership of the Muslim League, for his willingness to lay aside some of his personal feelings, and for his ability to guide the League into prompt and decisive action.

#### LAURELS FOR WAVELL

It is quite safe to suggest, however, that a substantial part of the laurels for implementing the proposal must go to the forthright action of a Viceroy who was also a soldier. The decisiveness of the declaration that the electoral machinery had already been set in motion was unquestionably an important factor in bringing the Congress party to its ultimate decision. Like a good campaigner, the Viceroy had anticipated the possible lines of attack and had prepared his positions accordingly.

It should not be suggested that this was an "imposition" of the British plan. It was, rather, an affirmation in deeds as well as words that the mission and the Viceroy did not propose, at this stage, to allow the situation to lapse entirely into its previous confusion.

Far-reaching problems remained to be solved. There was still a constitution to be drafted. The action that was taken, therefore, was not an ultimate answer to all of these questions. It was, however, the provision of machinery through which some further answers could be evolved.

The basic problem of Indian division had been recognized. A united India was still a dream for the future. There remained the necessity of reconciling, within the constituent assembly, the opposed political philosophies of the Muslim League and the Congress party. There remained the necessity for working out the status of the Indian Princes in relation to a new paramount power. There remained the necessity for safeguarding the rights of the various minorities. And there remained, finally, the desirability of reconciling Gandhi and his followers to the plan for an Indian union.

But by the actions that had been taken, the meeting of these difficult tasks was placed, primarily, in the hands of the Indian groups themselves.

It was too much to expect that instant harmony could be achieved. The Cabinet mission had discovered that in three months of complex negotiation.

It was not too much to hope that a basis could be laid for the creation of a new Indian state to which could be accorded the status of a sovereign

nation. This was the purpose of the Cabinet mission and the Viceroy. That purpose was achieved. This was one mission that did not fail

#### INTERIM GOVERNMENT

This success, however, pertained only to the drafting of long-range plans. In respect to the immediate problem, that of forming an interim representative government, the courses of action that had been taken up to this point and the actions that were to follow led to the worst outbreaks of communal strife in India's history. And if the Viceroy had been forceful and successful in bringing about direct action on the election of members of the Constituent Assembly, he was singularly unsuccessful in bringing Hindus and Muslims to a common ground in his executive Council.

On June 26, the Cabinet mission and the Viceroy announced that, following the refusal of the Congress party to participate, the formation of a popular government would be delayed. It was obviously the British view that a popular and representative government ought to be just that, and that it could be neither popular nor truly representative if it did not include members of the largest political party in India.

The Muslim League, however, viewed the matter in a quite different light. It was immediately pointed out that the Viceroy, in his statement of June 16, when invitations to the Council were extended to members of the Congress party and the Muslim League, had made two specific declarations. He had said, first: "If any of these [the persons invited to participate] is unable for personal reasons to accept, the Viceroy will, after consultation, invite some other person in his place." Second, the same statement had said: "In the event of the major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a coalition government on the above lines, it is planned to proceed with the formation of an interim government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the British Cabinet mission's statement of May 16."

Mr. Jinnah promptly pointed out that members of the Congress party had refused "for personal reasons" to accept the invitation, but that the Viceroy had not invited other persons to take their places. He also noted that "one of the major parties," in this case the Congress party, had proved unwilling to join in the setting up of a coalition on the lines indicated, but that the Viceroy, instead of proceeding with the formation of an interim

government as he had said he would, had announced that such a step would be delayed. Moreover, the statement of June 16 had declared that this interim government would be made up from those "willing to accept the British Cabinet mission's statement of May 16." The Muslim League had accepted that statement. The Congress party had rejected it. Yet the Viceroy apparently did not propose to make up a new Council without Congress party representatives.

On these two counts, therefore, Mr. Jinnah accused the Viceroy of having "whittled down" the declaration of June 16, on the one hand, and of having been guilty of a "breach of faith" on the other. He suggested to the Viceroy that there be a general postponement of the program, both long-range and immediate, until this issue was clarified. Lord Wavell did not concur.

#### THE "CARETAKER" COUNCIL

Instead, the Viceroy, on June 29, announced the formation of a temporary "Caretaker" Government. This was the distribution of portfolios: War—Sir Claude Auchinleck; Commerce and Commonwealth Relations—Sir Gurunath Bewoor; Finance—Sir Eric Coates; War Transport, Railways, Posts and Air—Sir Eric Conran-Smith; Food and Agriculture—Sir Robert Hutchings; Labor and Works, Mines and Power, Information and Arts, Health—Sir Akbar Hydari; Law and Education—Sir George Spence; Home, Industries and Supplies—A. A. Waugh.

This Council was in no sense popular or representative; indeed, it was obviously meant to be conspicuously the opposite. The Council was reduced to eight through a combination of portfolios. Three of the eight, Auchinleck, Hydari and Waugh had been members of the previous Council. The five others were Department Secretaries. All were strictly "official." Six of the eight were Britons. Of the two Indians, one was a Hindu and one a Muslim, but neither had any party connection with either group.

The very character of this Council made it plain that it was temporary. But there was no assurance that the Muslim League, at this stage, would be invited to join a permanent body unless the Congress party previously changed its position. Communal tension, therefore, instead of being re-

lieved by the formation of a completely non-communal administration, was heightened.

It broke on July 2 with rioting in Ahmedabad, important mill center north of Bombay. Thirty-three persons were killed, 250 wounded and a hundred arrested in two days of disorder. Almost simultaneously caste riots began in Bombay and developed into communal clashes. Three were killed and fifteen injured.

The Congress party's General Committee was in session, meanwhile, and on July 5 it ratified the party's acceptance of the long-term proposals, but was silent on the plans for an interim government. On July 6, Pandit Nehru was inducted as president of the party.

A meeting of the Muslim League's General Committee followed. The League charged that the Congress party's action was an acceptance of the long-range plan "only conditionally and with reservations." It was announced on July 9, therefore, that the League had decided to re-examine its acceptance of the long-term plans in the light of Congress party reservations.

Pandit Nehru undertook, as the new president, to set forth the Congress party position. The party had previously stated that its reservations and exceptions had been made only "to clarify points that had been in doubt." Pandit Nehru made plain how the Congress party proposed to "clarify" those points.

In an address in Bombay on July 10 he declared that the Congress party had decided to enter the Constituent Assembly "on the strict understanding that that body would be unfettered in its work." The Constituent Assembly, he said, would not accept any dictation from the British Government and limitations upon it, if any, would be only those brought about "by the compulsion of facts." In addition, he stated, he and his party expected that the scope of the new government at the center, that is, the Indian Federation, would be automatically expanded when administrative necessities were faced.

From the Muslim League's point of view, its worst fears had now been realized. The Congress party proposed to go into the Assembly "unfettered." The Muslims interpreted that as meaning simply that the Congress party did not propose to be bound by the terms of the British plan

and that, once in the Assembly, the Hindus would swiftly modify the entire basis of Provincial grouping, which was the one thing that had brought the Muslims to accept the proposal in the first place. And the Muslims could count on having just 78 seats in an Assembly of 385. (They had actually elected only 73.)

But that was not all. The Congress party clearly intended that the functions of the Federation Government would be "automatically expanded." The Muslim case from the beginning had been based on the necessity for the strictest possible limitation of those functions. "Automatic expansion" of scope in the hands of an "unfettered" Congress party majority meant to the Muslims only one thing, the swift doom of the Pakistan idea and all its connotations. The Congress party was publicly proposing to take the bit between its teeth and the Muslims were publicly and frankly frightened over where the runaway would end.

It was in that frame of mind that the Muslim League Council met in Bombay on July 27 to re-open the discussion of its acceptance of the long-range plan. Their three-day meeting was hardly a discussion at all. It was largely given over to invective and diatribe against both the British and the Congress party. The Muslims were on the defensive and a very greatly alarmed defensive at that. They became progressively more violent; they denounced British "treachery"; they clamored for "total war" on the Congress party; they elaborated on their "betrayal."

The upshot was inevitable. With no appreciable dissent, the League withdrew its previous acceptance of the constitutional proposals. Mr. Jinnah declared that for the first time the Muslims were forced to abandon "constitutional methods." He proclaimed a campaign of "direct action."

Mr. Jinnah subsequently explained that this was "not a declaration of war," that the form of "direct action" had not been determined, and that the initiative must come from the British, not the Muslim League. But the damage had already been done. "Direct Action Day" was set for August 16, when there was to be a one-day Muslim *hartal* (general strike and shop-closing) throughout India as a protest against the alleged Congress party-British collusion.

The initiative, meanwhile, did come from the British, as Jinnah had demanded, but in an opposite direction. Pandit Nehru was asked by the Viceroy to submit a panel of names of persons suitable for a representa-

tive Indian interim government. Pandit Nehru accepted this invitation and immediately invited Mr. Jinnah to meet him in a conference. He asked the cooperation of the Muslim League in forming a Council.

The two party leaders met on August 15, but the meeting was fruitless. Mr. Jinnah stated that Pandit Nehru had offered the Muslim League five seats out of Council of fourteen, the remainder to be filled by Congress party nominees. It is doubtful that the offer was made in just those terms, but apparently five places was the most the Muslim League could hope for. It was a far cry from "parity."

The next day, August 16, the storm broke in Calcutta.

In four days of rioting more than 3,000 persons were killed. This was the worst communal clash in the history of modern India. Arson and looting were virtually unchecked. Of the first 600 patients admitted to Calcutta hospitals more than two-thirds were treated for stab wounds in the back. Casualties caused by police volleys were proportionately small. No European was injured. This was communal-religious-political guerrilla warfare.

Each side, naturally, accused the other of having begun the strife. Just how and where it started may, indeed, never be known.

It is impossible, however, to exculpate Premier Suhrawardy of Bengal Province. He headed the Muslim League government of the Province. In that capacity he proclaimed "Direct Action Day." And he proclaimed it, not merely for Bengal Province, with its slender Muslim majority, but also for the city of Calcutta whose population was three-fourths Hindu. This was not merely partisanship; it was criminal ineptitude.

The Muslim League lost ground as a result of the riots. If this was "direct action" it had nothing to recommend it. Likewise, the Muslim League was at a dead end, politically. It had voted for complete government boycott at the very time that a new government was in process of formation.

#### THE NEW INTERIM COUNCIL

Calcutta was still burying its dead when the Viceroy announced a new Executive Council, India's interim popular government. It was a Congress party Council, headed by Pandit Nehru. Twelve members of the proposed fourteen were named. Six were members of the Congress party.

Three Muslims were chosen, one a member of the Congress party and the two others opposed to the Muslim League. The representative of the Untouchables was again Jagjivan Ram, closely in touch with and dominated by, the Congress party. The Sikh member was also a Congress party sympathizer. Only the Indian Christian and Parsi members could be said to be independent of Congress party influence.

The Viceroy announced, however, that five seats would be available for Muslim League members whenever the League chose to enter the government. This recalled Mr. Jinnah's statement that Pandit Nehru had offered him five Council seats of fourteen. The best the Muslim League could hope for, then, under any conditions, was to gain the support of the Parsi and Indian Christian members to obtain a tie vote. There seemed little likelihood that this would be acceptable to Mr. Jinnah and his followers.

The composition of the new Council was this: Pandit Nehru, Congress party president, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Congress party "strong man"; Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Congress party Working Committee member; Sarat Chandra Bose, Bengal Congress party leader and brother of the puppet Subhas Chandra Bose; C. Rajagopalacharia, Congress party Working Committee member; M. Asaf Ali, Congress party Muslim and leader in the legislature; Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, former Muslim League member who resigned in opposition to its policies; Syed Ali Zaheer, secretary of the anti-Muslim League Shia Conference, Jagjivan Ram, Untouchable, under Congress party influence; Sardar Baldev Singh, Sikh, opposed to the Muslim League; Dr. John Matthai, Indian Christian, prominent industrialist and non-political; C. H. Bhabha, Parsi, business man with no previous political experience.

This Council was installed on September 2. Not all of its members could be present for the ceremony. One of them, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, was in the hospital recovering from stab wounds inflicted on him within a few hours of the announcement of his appointment.

The installation was the signal for a new outburst of violence. This time it centered in Bombay, the home of Mr. Jinnah, where there is a strong and militant Muslim community. Several hundred persons were killed in Bombay, more than a thousand injured, and more than 2,500 arrested. The worst of the stabbing and burning was brought under con-

trol (with the aid of a torrential rain) within three days, but localized clashes continued. There were similar outbreaks, on a smaller scale, in Poona, Dacca, Ahmedabad, and some other cities.

Leaders in both the Congress party and the Muslim League repeatedly deplored and disavowed these clashes. But they were not able to maintain discipline among their followers. In addition, it was widely believed that professional criminals, with not party feeling, took advantage of the situation to continue burning and especially looting.

On September 9, Mr. Jinnah suggested that a fresh start be made on the entire program, both interim and long-range. He declared that India's blood bath had already left such a legacy of enmities that compromise along the existing lines was impossible. Pandit Nehru responded by reaffirming that five seats in the Council were still open to the Muslim League. The Viceroy responded by inviting Mr. Jinnah to a series of conversations, particularly in reference to the long-range phases of the plan. At the same time that this invitation was issued it was announced, officially, that the Constituent Assembly would be called into session on December 9. It was assumed, therefore, that the Viceroy's conversations with Mr. Jinnah were more profoundly concerned with bringing the Muslim League into the Assembly than with immediate changes in the composition of the Council.

The Viceroy's talks with Mr. Jinnah were officially described as "friendly" and there was reason to hope that some progress could be made. It was clear, however, that Britain was determined that the opposition of a minority, however vocal or violent, would not be allowed again to deadlock negotiations, or permanently to impede the political progress of the country.

Apparently this was made evident to Mr. Jinnah. On Oct. 15 the Viceroy was able to announce that the Muslim League had accepted his invitation to send five members to the Executive Council. Three previously appointed members resigned. They were Sarat Chandra Bose and two Congress party-nominated Muslims, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan and Syed Ali Zaheer.

Mr. Jinnah himself did not accept appointment, but representing the League were Liaquat Ali Khan, second in command, I. I. Chundrigar, from Bombay, Abdur Rab Nishtar, from the North-West Frontier Prov-



ince and Chazanfar Ali Khan, party leader in the Punjab. In addition the Muslim League named an Untouchable, Jogendra Nath Mandal, who is opposed to the Congress party.

In this fashion the Muslim League accepted an uneasy compromise, having been assured by the Viceroy that the original proposals would be carried out.

This was the situation as India moved toward the drafting of a constitution for her independent statehood.

The very proximity of great changes had sharpened rather than assuaged animosities. India had reason to hope for the future. But it was a divided India that approached it.

---

## APPENDIX:

---

### TEXT OF THE BRITISH PROPOSALS OF MAY, 1946

Item 1—On the March 15, last, just before the dispatch of the Cabinet mission to India, Mr. Attlee, the British Prime Minister, used these words:

“My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavors to help her attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible. What form of government is to replace the present regime is for India to decide; but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith machinery for making that decision.

“I hope that the Indian people may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth. I am certain that she will find great advantages in doing so. But if she does so elect it must be by her own free will. The British Commonwealth and Empire is not bound together by chains of external compulsion. It is a free association of free peoples. If on the other hand, she elects for independence, in our view she has the right to do so. It will be for us to help make the transition as smooth and easy as possible.”

Item 2—Charged in these historic words we—the Cabinet Ministers and the Viceroy—have done our utmost to assist the two main political parties to reach agreement upon the fundamental issue of the unity or division of India. After prolonged discussions in New Delhi we succeeded in bringing the Congress and the Muslim League together in a conference at Simla.

There was a full exchange of views and both parties were prepared to make considerable concessions in order to try to reach a settlement, but it ultimately proved impossible to close the remainder of the gap between the parties and so no agreement could be concluded. Since no agreement has been reached we feel it our duty to put forward what we consider are the best arrangements possible to ensure a speedy setting up of a new constitution. This statement is made with the full approval of his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

Item 3—We have accordingly decided that immediate arrangements should be made whereby Indians may decide the future constitution of India and an interim Government may be set up at once to carry on the administration of British India until such time as the new constitution can be brought into being. We endeavored to be just to smaller as well as larger sections of the people; and to recommend a solution which will lead to a practicable way of governing the India of the future and will give a sound basis for defense and a good opportunity for progress in the social, political and economic field.

Item 4—It is not intended in this statement to review the voluminous evidence which has been submitted to the mission; but it is right that we should state it has shown an almost universal desire, outside of supporters of the Muslim League, for the unity of India.

Item 5—This consideration did not, however, deter us from examining closely and impartially the possibility of a partition of India since we were greatly impressed by the very genuine and acute anxiety of Muslims lest they should find themselves subjected to perpetual Hindu-Majority rule. This feeling has become so strong and widespread amongst Muslims that it cannot be allayed by mere paper safeguards. If there is to be internal peace in India it must be secured by measures which will assure to Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion and economic or other interests.

Item 6—We therefore examined in the first instance the question of a separate and fully independent sovereign State of Pakistan as claimed by the Muslim League. Such a Pakistan would comprise two areas—one in the northwest consisting of the Provinces of the Punjab, Sind, the North-West Frontier and British Baluchistan; and other in the northeast consisting of the Provinces of Bengal and Assam.

The League were prepared to consider adjustment of boundaries at a later stage but insisted that the principle of Pakistan should first be acknowledged. Argument for a separate state of Pakistan was based first upon the right of the Muslim majority to decide their method of government according to their wishes and secondly upon the necessity to include substantial areas in which the Muslims are in the minority in order to make Pakistan administratively and economically workable.

The size of the non-Muslim minorities in a Pakistan comprising the

whole of the six Provinces enumerated above would be very considerable as the following figures (all population figures in this statement are from the most recent census, taken in 1941) show

NORTHWESTERN AREA:		MUSLIM	NON-MUSLIM
Punjab		16,217,242	12,201,577
North-West Frontier Province		2,788,797	249,270
Sind		3,208,325	1,326,683
British Baluchistan		438,930	62,701
Totals		22,653,294	13,840,231
		62.07 per cent Muslim, 37.93 per cent non-Muslim	
NORTHEASTERN AREA		MUSLIM	NON-MUSLIM
Bengal		33,005,434	27,301,091
Assam		3,442,479	6,762,254
Totals		36,447,913	34,063,345
		51.69 per cent Muslim, 48.31 per cent non-Muslim.	

Muslim minorities in the remainder of British India number some 20,000,000 (M) dispersed amongst a total population of 188,000,000 (M).

These figures show that setting up a separate sovereign state of Pakistan on the lines claimed by the Muslim League would not solve the communal problem or minority problem. Nor can we see any justification for including within sovereign Pakistan those districts of the Punjab and Bengal and Assam in which the population is predominately non-Muslim. Every argument that can be used in favor of Pakistan can equally, in our view, be used in favor of exclusion of non-Muslim areas from Pakistan. This point would particularly affect the position of the Sikhs.

Item 7—We therefore considered whether a smaller sovereign Pakistan confined to Muslim-majority areas alone might be a possible basis of compromise. Such Pakistan is regarded by the Muslim League as quite impracticable because it would entail exclusion from Pakistan (a) the whole of the Ambala and the Jullundur division in Punjab, (b) the whole of Assam except the districts of Sylhet and (c) a large part of western Bengal including Calcutta, in which city the percentage of Muslim population is 32.6 per cent.

We ourselves are also convinced that any solution which involves radical partition of the Punjab and Bengal, as this would do, would be contrary to the wishes and interests of a very large proportion of the inhabit-

ants of these provinces. Bengal and the Punjab each has its own common language and long history and tradition. Moreover, any division of the Punjab would of necessity divide Sikhs, leaving substantial bodies of Sikhs on both sides of the boundary. We have therefore been forced to the conclusion that neither a larger nor smaller sovereign state of Pakistan would provide an acceptable solution for the communal problem.

Item 8—Apart from the great force of the foregoing arguments there are weighty administrative, economic and military considerations. The whole of the transportation and postal and telegraph systems of India have been established on the basis of a United India. To disintegrate them would gravely injure both parts of India. The case for united defense is even stronger. The Indian armed forces have been built up as a whole for the defense of India as a whole and to break them into two would inflict a deadly blow on the long traditions and high degree of efficiency of the Indian Army and would entail the gravest dangers. The Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force would become much less effective. The two sections of the suggested Pakistan contain the two most vulnerable frontiers in India and for successful defense in depth the area of Pakistan would be insufficient.

Item 9—A further consideration of importance is the greater difficulty which the Indian States would find in associating themselves with a divided British India.

Item 10—Finally there is the geographical fact that two halves of the proposed Pakistan state are separated by some 700 miles and communications between them both in war and peace would be dependent on the goodwill of Hindustan.

Item 11—We are therefore unable to advise the British Government that the power which at present resides in British hands should be handed over to two entirely separate sovereign states.

Item 12—This decision does not however blind us to the very real Muslim apprehensions that their culture and political and social life might become submerged in a purely unitary India in which the Hindus with their greatly superior numbers must be the dominating element. To meet this the Congress have put forward a scheme under which Provinces would have full autonomy, subject only to a minimum of central subjects such as foreign affairs, defense and communication.

Under this scheme Provinces, if they wished to take part in economic and administrative planning on a large scale, could cede to the center optional subjects in addition to the compulsory ones mentioned above.

Item 13—Such a scheme would, in our view, present considerable constitutional disadvantages and anomalies. It would be very difficult to work a central executive and legislature in which some Ministers who dealt with compulsory subjects were responsible to the whole of India while other Ministers who dealt with optional subjects would be responsible only to those Provinces who had elected to act together in respect of such subjects.

This difficulty would be accentuated in a Central Legislature where it would be necessary to exclude certain members from speaking and voting when subjects with which their Provinces were not concerned were under discussion. Apart from the difficulty of working such a scheme we do not consider it would be fair to deny to other Provinces which did not desire to take optional subjects at the center the right to form themselves into a group for a similar purpose. This would indeed be no more than the exercise of their autonomous powers in a particular way.

Item 14—Before putting forward our recommendations we turn to deal with the relationship of the Indian States to British India. It is quite clear that with attainment of independence by British India, whether inside or outside the British Commonwealth, the relationship which has hitherto existed between the rulers of the States and the British Crown will no longer be possible. Paramountcy can neither be retained by the British Crown nor transferred to the new government.

This fact has been fully recognized by those whom we interviewed from the States. They have at the same time assured us that the States are ready and willing to co-operate in the new development of India. The precise form which their co-operation will take must be a matter for negotiation during the building up of the new constitutional structure and it by no means follows that it will be identical for all States. We have not therefore dealt with the States in the same detail as the Provinces of British India in the paragraphs which follow.

Item 15—We now indicate the nature of the solution which in our view would be just to the essential claims of all parties and would at the

same time be most likely to bring about a stable and practicable form of constitution for all India.

We recommend that the constitution should take the following basic form:

(1) There should be a Union of India embracing both British India and the States which should deal with the following subjects Foreign affairs, defense and communications, and should have the powers necessary to raise finances required for the above subjects.

(2) The Union should have an Executive and a Legislature constituted from the British India and States representatives. Any question raising a major communal issue in the Legislature should require for its decision a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities as well as a majority of all members present and voting.

(3) All subjects other than Union subjects and all residuary powers should be vested in the Provinces.

(4) The States will retain all subjects and powers other than those ceded to the Union.

(5) The Provinces should be free to form groups with executives and legislatures, and each group could determine the Provincial subjects to be taken in common.

(6) The constitutions of the Union and of the groups should contain a provision whereby any Province could by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly call for reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of ten years and at ten yearly intervals thereafter.

Item 16—It is not our object to lay out details of a constitution on the above program to set in motion machinery whereby the constitution can be settled by Indians for Indians.

It has been necessary, however, for us to make this recommendation as to a broad basis of the future constitution because it became clear to us in the course of our negotiations that not until that had been done was there any hope of getting the two major communities to join in setting up of the constitution-making machinery.

Item 17—We now indicate the constitution-making machinery which we propose should be brought into being forthwith in order to enable the new constitution to be worked out.

Item 18—In forming any assembly to decide a new constitutional structure the first problem is to obtain as broad-based and accurate representation of the whole population as is possible. The most satisfactory method obviously would be by an election based on adult franchise but any attempt to introduce such a step now would lead to wholly unacceptable delay in the formation of the new constitution.

The only practicable course is to utilize recently elected Provincial legislative assemblies as electing bodies. There are, however, two factors in their composition which make this difficult. The first is that the numerical strength of the Provincial legislative assemblies do not bear the same proportion to the total population in each Province.

Item 19—We therefore propose that there shall be elected by each Provincial legislative assembly the following numbers of Representatives, each part of the legislative assembly (general, Muslim or Sikh) electing its own representatives by a method of proportional representation with a single transferable vote:

---

SECTION A			
PROVINCE	GENERAL	MUSLIM	TOTAL
Madras	45	4	49
Bombay	19	2	21
United Provinces	47	8	55
Bihar	31	5	36
Central Provinces	16	1	17
Orissa	9	0	9
TOTAL	167	20	187

SECTION B				
PROVINCE	GENERAL	MUSLIMS	SIKHS	TOTAL
Punjab	8	16	4	28
N W. Frontier	0	3	0	3
Sind	1	3	0	4
TOTAL	9	22	4	35

SECTION C			
PROVINCE	GENERAL	MUSLIM	TOTAL
Bengal	27	33	60
Assam	7	3	10
TOTAL	34	36	70
Total for British India, 292.			
Maximum for the Indian States, 93.			
Grand Total, 385			

---



NOTE: In order to represent the chief commissioners' Provinces there will be added to Section *A* the member representing Delhi in the Central Legislative Assembly, the member representing Ajmer-Merwara in the Central Legislative Assembly and a representative to be elected by the Coorg Legislative Council. To Section *B* will be added a representative of British Baluchistan.

(2) It is the intention that States would be given in the final Constituent Assembly appropriate representation which would not on the basis of calculation of population adopted for British India, exceed ninety-three; but the method of selection will have to be determined by consultation. The States would in the preliminary stage be represented by the negotiating committee.

(3) Representatives thus chosen shall meet in New Delhi as soon as possible.

(4) A preliminary meeting will be held at which the general order of business will be decided, a chairman and other officers elected and an advisory committee (see Paragraph 20 below) on rights of citizen minorities and tribal and excluded areas set up. Therefore provincial representatives will divide up into three sections shown under *A*, *B* and *C* in the table of representation in Subparagraph 1 of this paragraph.

Thus Assam, with a population of 10,000,000 has a legislative assembly of 108 members, while Bengal, with a population of six times as large, has an assembly of only 250. Secondly, owing to the weightage given minorities by communal award strengths of the several communities in each Provincial legislative assembly are not in proportion to their numbers in the Province.

Thus the number of seats reserved for Muslims in the Bengal legislative assembly is only 48 per cent of the total, although they form 55 per cent of the Provincial population. After most careful consideration of the various methods by which these points might be corrected, we have come to the conclusion that the fairest and most practicable plan would be:

(a) To allot to each Province a total number of seats proportional to its population roughly a ratio on 1 to 1,000,000 as the nearest substitute for representation by adult suffrage.

(b) To divide the provincial allocation of seats between the main communities in each Province in proportion to their population.

(c) To provide that representatives allocated to each community in a Province shall be elected by members of that community in its legislative assembly.

We think that for these purposes it is sufficient to recognize only three main communities in India, general, Muslim and Sikh, the "general" community including all persons who are not Muslims or Sikhs. As smaller minorities would upon a population basis have little or no representation since they would lose the weightage which assures them seats in the Provincial legislatures, we have made arrangements set out in Paragraph 20 below to give them full representation in all matters of special interest to minorities.

(5) These sections shall proceed to settle Provincial constitutions for the Provinces included in each section and shall also decide whether any group constitution shall be set up for those Provinces and if so with what provincial subjects the group should deal. The Provinces should have power to opt out of groups in accordance with provisions of Subclause 8 below.

(6) Representatives of sections and Indian States shall reassemble for the purpose of settling the union constitution.

(7) In the union of the Constituent Assembly a resolution varying the provisions of Paragraph 15 above or raising any major communal issue shall require a majority of representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities. The chairman of the Assembly shall decide which, if any, resolutions raise major communal issues and shall, if so requested by a majority of the representatives of either of the major communities, consult the Federal Court before giving his decision.

(8) As soon as new constitutional arrangements have come into operation it shall be open to any Province to elect to come out of any group in which it has been placed. Such decision shall be taken by the legislature of the Province after the first general election under the new constitution.

Item 20—The advisory committee on the rights of citizens, minorities and tribal and excluded areas will contain due representation of the interest afforded and their function will be to report to the Union Constituent Assembly upon a list of the fundamental rights clauses for protection of minorities and schemes for the administration of tribal and excluded areas

and to advise whether these rights should be incorporated in a provincial group or union constitutions.

Item 21—His Excellency the Viceroy will forthwith request the Provincial legislatures to proceed with election of their representatives and the States to set up a negotiating committee.

It is hoped that the process of constitution-making can proceed as rapidly as the complexities of the task permit so that the interim period may be as short as possible.

Item 22—It will be necessary to negotiate a treaty between the Union Constituent Assembly and the United Kingdom to provide for certain matters arising out of the transfer of powers.

Item 23—While the constitution-making proceeds, the administration of India has to be carried on. We attach great importance therefore to setting up at once of the Interim Government having the support of the major political parties.

It is essential during the interim period that there should be the maximum of co-operation in carrying through difficult tasks that face the Government of India. Besides the heavy tasks of day-to-day administration there is grave danger of famine to be countered, there are decisions to be taken in many matters of postwar development which will have far-reaching effect on India's future and there are important international conferences in which India has to be represented. For all these purposes, a government having popular support is necessary.

The Viceroy has already started discussions to this end and hopes soon to form an Interim Government in which all portfolios, including that of the war member, will be held by Indian leaders having the full confidence of the people. The British Government, recognizing the significance of the changes, will give the fullest measure of co-operation to the government so formed in accomplishment of its tasks of administration and in bringing about as rapid and smooth a transition as possible.

Item 24—To the leaders and people of India who now have the opportunity of complete independence, we would finally say this. We and our Government and our countrymen hoped that it would be possible for the Indian people themselves to agree upon a method of framing a new constitution under which they will live.

Despite the labors which we have shared with the Indian parties and

exercise of much patience and good will will be all, this has not been possible. We therefore now lay before you the proposals which, after listening to all sides and after much earnest thought, we trust will enable you to attain your independence in the shortest time and with the least danger of internal disturbance and conflict. These proposals may not, of course, completely satisfy all parties but you will recognize with us that at this supreme moment in Indian history statesmanship demands mutual accommodation and we ask you to consider the alternative to the acceptance of these proposals.

After all efforts which we and the Indian parties have made together for agreement, we must state that in our view there is small hope of peaceful settlement by agreement of the Indian parties alone. The alternative would therefore be the grave danger of violence, chaos and even civil war.

The gravity and duration of such disturbance cannot be foreseen but it is certain it would be a terrible disaster for many millions of men, women and children. This is a possibility which must be regarded with equal abhorrence by the Indian people, our own countrymen and the world as a whole. We therefore lay these proposals before you in the profound hope they will be accepted and operated by you in the spirit of accommodation and good will in which they are offered. We appeal to all who have the future good of India at heart to extend their vision beyond their own community or interest to the interests of the whole 400,000,000 of the Indian people.

We hope the new independent India may choose to be a member of the British Commonwealth. We hope in any event you remain in close and friendly association with our people. But these are matters for your own free choice. Whatever that choice may be we look forward with you to your ever-increasing prosperity among the greatest nations of the world and to a future even more glorious than your past.



# INDEX

## A

- Abdullah, Sheikh Mohammed, 228
- ✓ Accession of Princess, 123
- Act of 1935, 15, 16, 26, 105, 123, 132ff.
- Afghanistan, 25
- Agencies, 117
- Agricultural plan, 79
- Ahmsa, 97
- Ahmed Khan, Sir Shafaat, 240
- Ahmedabad, riots in, 237
- Air Force, Royal Indian, 190
- Akbar, 143
- Alexander, A. V., 23
- Ali, Choudhary Rahmat, 153
- Ali Khan, Chazanfar, 242
- Ali Khan, Nawabzada Liaquat, 222, 241
- Aligarh University, 86
- Allahabad agricultural station, 59
- Allahabad decision, 100
- ✓ Ambedkar, Dr B R., 64, 224, 230
- Amery, Leopold S., 17, 178
- Amritsar Massacre, 44
- Anglo-Indians, 49, 230
- Arab League, 25, 180
- Area of India, 53
- Army, Indian, 63, 99, 110, 135, 186ff
- Asaf Ali, M., 240
- Asceticism, 140
- Asoka, 143
- Atlantic Charter, 16, 22
- Attlee, Clement, 22
- Auchinleck, Sir Claude, 186, 236
- ✓ August Offer, 109
- Azad, Maulana, 228

## B

- Babu, 50
- Balfour Declaration, 6, 15
- Baroda, 70
- Gaekwar of, 64
- Benares, University, 86
- ✓ Bengal, 30, 43, 69
- and Pakistan proposal, 177
- Bengali, 69, 134
- Bewoor, Sir Gurunath, 236

- Bhabha, C H., 240
- Bhopal, Nawab of, 121ff
- Bihar, 11, 55, 70
- Bihari, 70
- Bikaner, Maharajah of, 119
- Bill of Rights, 197ff.
- Bombay, 70
- riots in, 46, 240
- Bombay Plan, 84
- Bombay resolution, 101
- Borrowing power, 203
- Bose, Sarat Chandra, 226, 240
- Bose, Subhas Chandra, 226
- Brahmanism, 138ff
- Brahmin, 61
- Broadcasting, 75

## C

- ✓ Cabinet mission, 195, 204
- Cabinet mission proposal, 206ff., 243
- Calcutta riots, 239
- Caretaker Government, 236
- Caste system, 61ff., 142
- Cattle, 60
- ✓ Chamber of Princess, 121, 217
- Chiang Kai-shek, 99
- Child marriage, 65
- Chundrigar, I. I., 241
- ✓ Churchill, Winston, 8, 16-18, 29, 157, 158
- Civil Service, 8, 13, 50, 92, 129
- Civil war, 183ff.
- Club, British, 48
- Coates, Sir Eric, 236
- Cochin, 71
- ✓ Congress party, 27, 34, 91, 217, 230, 231
- resignations from, 107
- Conran-Smith, Sir Eric, 236
- ✓ Constituent Assembly, 237
- table of representation, 249
- ✓ Constitution, 38
- Cooperatives, 83
- Cotton, 8, 10
- Council of State, 129
- Councils Act, Indian, 13, 128
- Coupland, Sir Reginald, 20

- Credit balance, 11  
 Cripps, Sir Stafford, 18, 23  
 Cripps Proposals, 18ff.  
 Crown Representative, 116
- D
- Debt, agricultural, 59  
 Declaration of war, 106  
 Defense of India Regulations, 109, 200  
*Dhon*, 9  
 "Direct Action Day," 238  
 Disorders of 1942, 102ff.  
 "Divide and Rule," 37  
 Dominion Status, 14, 76, 107, 202  
 Dominions, 202  
 Dravidian, 67, 71  
 Dyarchy, 130
- E
- East India Company, 7, 42, 115, 127  
 Economic autonomy, 7, 10  
 Economic relation to the United Kingdom, 6  
 Education, 85, 200  
 Elections in 1945, 166  
 Electricity, 83  
 Engineer, Sir N. P., 222  
 English language, 72  
 Executive Council, 94, 129, 208, 216  
 Extremists, 90
- F
- Factors, 9  
 Famine, 43, 54  
 Far Eastern Group Supply Council, 11  
 Faridkot, 211  
 Federal union, 195, 207  
 Federalism, 123, 136  
 Federation, theory of, 150  
 Fertilizer, 8, 57, 82  
 Food economy, balance of, 56  
 Fragmentation, 55  
 Freedom, 40
- G
- Gackwar of Baroda, 64  
 Ganges, 176, 191  
 Gandhi, Mohandas K., 35, 36, 39, 41, 45, 51, 63, 92, 94ff., 183, 210, 218, 227, 231  
 Gandhi-Jinnah letters, 160ff.
- Group Supply Council, Far Eastern, 11  
 Guerrilla warfare, 192  
 Gujarati, 70  
 Gurkhas, 189
- H
- Haig, Sir Harry, 106  
 Harijan, 63, 183  
 Harnam Singh, Sardar, 174  
 Hartal, 238  
 Hastings, Warren, 127  
 Hindi, 69  
 Hindu religion, 138ff.  
 Hindustani, 69  
 House of Commons, 204  
 Hume, Alan Octavian, 91  
 Hutchings, Sir Robert, 236  
 Hyat Khan, Sir Sikander, 106  
 Hydrabad, Sir Akbar, 236  
 Hyderabad, 70, 71, 113
- I
- Imperialism, 28ff.  
 Independence, 12, 22ff.  
 Indian India, 113ff.  
 "Indian National Army," 190, 226  
 Indo-Iranian, 67  
 Indore, 66  
 Industrialization, 56ff., 84  
 Industries, 10, 11  
 Infant mortality, 76  
 Infanticide, 66  
 Interim government, 232, 235, 239ff.  
 Intervention, 192  
 Iqbal, Sir Mohammed, 152  
 Irrigation, 58  
 Irwin, Lord, 14  
 Islam, 138ff.  
 Ismail Khan, Nawab Mohammed, 222
- J
- Jamshadpur, 11  
 Japanese agents, 103  
 Japanese threat, 98  
 Jats, 175  
 Jinnah, M. A., 95, 151, 209, 215, 222, 235ff., 238, 241  
     reply of, to Viceroy, 169  
 Jute, 11

## K

- Kanarese, 71
- Kashmir, 113
  - Nehru's trip to, 228
- Khan Noon, Sir Firoz, 181
- Kipling, Rudyard, 48
- Koranic law, 140
- Kshatriyas, 61

## L

- ✓ Lahore Resolution, 155
- Languages, 67ff., 134
- Lantha, 70
- Legislative Assembly, 129
- Liberties, individual, 199ff.
- Lingua franca*, 69, 72
- Linlithgow, Marquis of, 16, 64, 107ff., 177
- Liquidation of empire, 29
- Literacy, 67ff
  - progress of, 73

## M

- Macaulay, Lord, 72
- MacDonald, Ramsay, 15, 41
- Madras, 71
- Madrassi, 134
- Mahasabha, 171
- Mahteb, H. K., 222, 226
- Malayalam, 71
- Mandal, Jogendra Nath, 242
- Manipur, 181
- Marathi, 70
- Markets, 7, 58, 85
- Martial races, 188
- Matthai, Sir John, 222, 240
- Medical practice, 78
- Mediterranean line, 180
- Mendicancy, 140
- Metals, 9
- Milk, 60
- Minerals, 57
- Minority, Muslim, 149
- Moderates, 90
- Mogul Empire, 115
- Montagu, Edwin S., 13
- Montagu declaration, 13
- Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, 13, 129
- Morley-Minto Reforms, 128
- ✓ Muslim League, 27, 151ff., 213, 222, 235
  - action of, on July 27, 238

- Muslim religions, 138ff
- Muslims, attitude of, toward war, 151
  - economic position of, 144
  - population of, 148
- Mutiny, Indian, 12, 116, 127, 188

## N

- Nationalism, Asiatic, 2, 3
  - grievance, 4, 42
  - Indian, 33
- Navy, Royal Indian, 189
- Nawab of Bhopal, 121ff.
- Nazimuddin, Sir Khwaja, 222
- ✓ Nehru, Pandit, 36, 94, 99, 102, 211, 222, 228, 229, 237, 240
- Nishtar, Sardar Abdur Rab, 222, 242
- Nizam of Hyderabad, 118
- Non-cooperation, 33, 51, 95
- North-West Frontier Province, 70
- Nurses, 78

## O

- Orissa, 70
- Oriya, 70
- Oudh, Royal House of, 26

## P

- Pacifism, 98
- ✓ Pakistan, 35, 153ff., 206ff., 215, 244ff.
  - British reaction to, 177ff.
  - distribution of population, 245
  - geographic limits of, 164
- Pan-Islam, 180
- Parity, 216
- ✓ Patel, Sardar Vallabhbhai, 222, 229, 240
- Pathans, 190
- Pethick-Lawrence, Lord, 23
- Petroleum, 83
- Philippines, 30ff., 50
- Planning, Department of, 79
- Population, 53
  - by communities, 32
  - increase in, 53
  - pressure on the land and, 9, 11
  - rural and urban, 54
- Ports, 146, 191
- Power, 83
- Prasad, Dr Rajendra, 222, 240
- Pressure on land, 55
- Princely States, 25ff., 113ff., 208, 211



Provinces, 133*ff*  
 Provincial Legislatures, 105  
 Public health, 76  
 Puckle, Sir Frederick, 147  
 Punjab, 70, 173  
 Punjabi, 70, 134, 190  
 Purdah, 67, 141

## Q

Quezon, Manuel, 33  
 "Quit India" Campaign, 36, 111  
 Quit India resolution, 100*ff*

## R

Railways, 57, 81, 179  
     development plan, 82  
 Raj, 3, 35, 42  
 Rajagopalachari, C. R., 106, 158, 222, 240  
 Rajastani, 70  
 Rajputana, 70  
 Rajputs, 61  
 Ram, Jagjivan, 222, 240  
 Religious riots, 143  
 Reporting, 104  
 Representative Council, 225  
 Representative Indians, 94  
 Reserved powers, 130  
 Residents, 116  
 Retention of troops, 186, 211, 214  
 Roads, 81  
 Round Table Conferences, 15, 35, 41, 132  
 Royal Air Force, 203  
 Royal Navy, 203  
 Russia, 25  
     British apprehension of, 181

## S

Sahib, 198  
 Salt March to the Sea, 96  
 Salutes, 117  
 Sanitation, 77  
 Sapru, Sir Tej Bahadur, 35  
 Sapru Committee, 35, 184  
 Sargent, John, plan by, 85*ff*  
 Satyagraha, 96, 109  
 Scheduled castes, 61  
 School attendance, 87  
 Secession, 136  
 Seed, 59  
 Segregation, 143

Shastric law, 141  
 Sikhs, 37, 59, 173*ff*, 189, 192, 209, 215  
 Simla Conference, of 1945, 166  
     of 1946, 183, 205  
 Simon, Sir John, 14  
 Simon Commission, 14, 35  
 Singh, Sirdar Baldev, 222  
 Sovereignty, 24, 214, 220  
 Special electorates, 131  
 Spence, Sir George, 236  
 State, Indian, 25*ff*  
 Statement, of June 16, 222  
     of May 25, 212*ff*.  
 Steel, 9, 11  
 Sudras, 61  
 Suffrage, graduated, 75  
 Sugar, 51  
 Suhrawardy, H. S., 239  
 Suttee, 65  
 Swaraj, 3

## T

Taboos, 141  
 Tagore, Rabindranath, 69  
 Tamil, 71  
 Tariff, autonomy, 10  
 Tata, 11  
 Telegu, 71  
 Textiles, 8, 10  
     consumption of, 10  
 Thuggee, 66  
 Tilak, B. G., 91, 105, 111  
 Titles, 117  
 Transferred powers, 130  
 Travancore, 71  
 Treaties, 126  
 Treaty, negotiation of, 214

## U

Unification, 179  
 United Nations, 193, 201  
 United Provinces, 70  
     Muslims, 154  
 United States, 136, 184, 197  
 Untouchables, 61, 230  
 Urdu, 69

## V

Vaisyas, 61  
 Veiling of women, 141

Viceroy's address of 1946, 167ff  
Viceroy's council, 94, 129, 208, 216  
Victoria, Queen, 65  
Declaration of, 12

## W

War Academy, 187  
War Cabinet proposals, 18, 41, 124, 195  
Wardha declaration of 1939, 108

Waugh, A. A., 236  
Wavell, Viscount, 22, 166, 204, 234  
Weighted representation, 130  
Westminster, Statute of, 6  
Women, British, 49

## Z

Zaheer, Syed Ali, 240